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NEWS SERVICE FOR WEEKLIES

U. S. Department of Agriculture

Special to Extension Editors

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CURRENT SERIAL RECORD
★ MAR 29 1956 ★
U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

In Minn., Wis., Ill., Ind., Mich., Ohio, Penna., N. Y., Maine, Vt.,
Mass., Conn., R. I.

Winter Logging Operations Attract Deer

Winter logging operations, particularly in mixed hardwood and hemlock forests or white cedar swamps, provide browse for large numbers of deer, according to foresters managing the Argonne Experimental Forest in northeastern Wisconsin (or State authority).

The deer browse the tips and needles of recently felled trees. This supplemental food often amounts to three or four hundred pounds per acre in a hardwood-hemlock cutting. It may enable many deer to live through the winter more successfully and save some of them from actual starvation in areas where browse is scarce.

A survey on the Argonne Experimental forest showed 330 deer crossings within a 1-mile stretch of a logging operation within a week of its completion. This compared with 50 crossings in a partial cut made 2 years previous, 5 crossings in an area which had not been logged for 35 years, and no crossings on an area which had been clear cut 2 years before. Deer probably stayed off the last because browse seedlings were too short to appear above the snow and there was no shelter to attract them.

This indicates that systematic winter logging operations can be a prime factor in attracting wildlife, thus adding to the use and value of the forest land, says the Forest Service of the U. S. Department of Agriculture (or other authority).

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Special to Extension Editors

MAR 30 1953

In N. C., S. C., Tenn., Ga., Ark., Ala., Miss., La., Tex., Okla., Fla.

Longleaf Pine Pays Its Way on Rundown Woodland

For those wondering if it pays to build up rundown farm woodlands to grow continuous crops of longleaf pine timber, the southern forest experiment station of the Forest Service in the U. S. Department of Agriculture has released the results of an experiment on the Escambia Experimental Forest near Brewton, Ala.

Forty acres put under systematic forest management in 1947 have produced $3,100 worth of timber products from sale of poorer trees. The 40 acres now have more and better trees than when cutting began. They are better spaced, growing stock is increasing, and the per-acre volume has increased.

The 40 acres selected for this experiment were considered typical of many rundown farm woodlands. There were some good trees, but many more poor trees, lots of scrub oak, and only one-third of the area was stocked to pine. In 1947, the timber stand was measured, pine growth was estimated, and annual cuts were started. Each year's cut has been less than the growth. Poorer trees are being removed first, leaving better ones to grow and improve the stand. Scrub oaks have been killed and bare areas burned to help establish longleaf pine seedlings.

Harvest from the 40 acres during the past 8 years totaled 197 poles, 23,000 board-feet of sawlogs, 62 cords of pulpwood, 21 barrels of gum, 24 cords of fuel-wood, and 380 fence posts. Total value of these on the stump is $1,190. At the market the value is $3,100. If a farmer did his own harvesting on such a lot, costs would total about $820, leaving him a profit of about $2,280.

The Forest Service experiment indicates that a farmer can profitably manage longleaf pine as an annual crop. It is pointed out that he need not cut trees each year--it might be better in some cases to cut every fifth year or so. Also, at current high stumpage prices, many farmers might find it best to sell marked timber on the stump, while others equipped for the job could increase profits by doing their own harvesting.

Greater returns are expected in the future from the Escambia Forest land. The 40 acres can eventually support about three times their present volume of 3,750 board-feet of timber per acre.

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MAR

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

In N. C., S. C., Ga., Va., Tenn., Ala., Ark., Fla., La., Tex., Okla.

Grazing Damage Heaviest in Young Pine Plantations

Growing numbers of cattle in the South, together with expanding reforestation efforts, mean that farmers are continually faced with the question whether it is profitable to allow grazing in young pine plantations.

________________________________ reports the results of some studies of
(State forester, or other authority)
cattle grazing damage to pine seedlings on eight different plantations, undertaken by the Southern Forest Experiment Station of the U. S. Department of Agriculture's Forest Service, between 1946 and 1954. These studies, according to ________________, have uncovered some facts that can help landowners decide how much grazing, if any, to permit on their own plantations.

Here are the principal conclusions reached from these observations in areas where grazing damage was noticeably heavy and for the most part uncontrolled.

Cattle rarely graze pine foliage where other green forage is available, but some trampling and browsing damage can always be expected in young pine plantations. Seedling losses are excessive in any place where cattle concentrate or overgraze.

Losses from trampling are greatest during the first year after planting and the first 2 years after seeding. Longleaf pine suffers heavier losses from trampling than slash or loblolly pine because the longleaf seedlings remain for several years in the vulnerable grass stage, with large terminal buds close to the ground.

If grazing is permitted the first few years after planting, it should not start before May 1 and should be sufficiently moderate so that not more than half of the green forage is used during the entire season. Desirable green forage is sparse in late winter and early spring, and browsing damage increases at this time.

The only positive way to prevent serious grazing damage is to keep cattle and all other kinds of livestock out of young plantations until the pines are 6 to 8 feet high, says ________________. Where this is impractical, grazing should be very carefully controlled.

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All States

Infrared Chick Brooders Grow in Popularity

Poultry producers are turning more and more to the infrared lamp method of brooding chicks, says ______________________.
(State or local authority)

If you are among those poultrymen who have not yet tried this method and you have electric power on your farm, you might like to consider a change from your present system, ______________________ suggests. With infrared brooders there is no fuel to carry, no ashes to remove, no burners to clean. Infrared brooders are light in weight, easy to set up, move, and store. And you can see the chicks without lifting a hover.

Readymade infrared brooders are available, marketing at prices ranging from $3 to $40, depending on the number of lamps used, the type of brooder, and whether they have automatic regulators.

Or you can make a brooder yourself, says _______________. Simple plans for building an infrared brooder have been prepared by the __________
(State)
Agricultural Extension Service. Copies of these can be obtained from county agricultural agents.

Another advantage of infrared brooders, according to _______________, is that the lamps have many other uses around the farm and home. They can be used for brooding pigs, calves, and lambs, for thawing frozen pipes, or even as a "heat lamp" in the home.

In case of power failure, a standby generator, a small stove, or some other alternative means of supplying heat should always be available if you use an infrared brooder.

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In Ala., Conn., Fla., Ga., Ind., Kans., Ky., La., Md., Mass., Minn.,
Mo., N. Y., N. C., Ohio, Pa., S. C., Tenn., Va., W. Va., Wisc.

Endrin and TDE Recommended as Insecticides for Hornworms on Tobacco

Winter is a good time to lay plans for controlling insects on next year's crops. Here's a tip from ________________ for controlling one of the principal pests of tobacco wherever it is grown.

Endrin and TDE are the most satisfactory insecticides for hornworms on tobacco, says ________________. Some insecticides other than these two will kill hornworms, ________________ explains, but they are not recommended for tobacco because they may cause disagreeable odors or undesirable residues that can lead to downgrading or rejection of the crop when it is marketed.

Either endrin or TDE is available from insecticide dealers as dust, ready for use, or in the form of emulsifiable concentrates and wettable powders to be mixed with water and applied as sprays.

Use of insecticides is only one means of protecting tobacco from hornworms, ________________ stresses, and this method is best considered only as a supplement to regular cultural practices that keep hornworm populations low. Plowing up stalks or otherwise destroying them after harvest cuts down on insect breeding in tobacco fields. And plowing tobacco fields in the fall kills many overwintering pupae (immature hornworms). The field may then be planted to rye or some other suitable cover crop. Picking hornworms by hand from the growing plants is also profitable, says ________________, and should be done whenever practical.

Most tobacco producers are already familiar with these cultural practices. But they should not be neglected, says ________________, because they cut down the need for using insecticides--always a somewhat dangerous practice at best.

Endrin and TDE are poisons--endrin being more toxic than TDE--and they should always be handled with care and in strict accordance with the manufacturer's directions.

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All States

Radioactive Fertilizers Add to Knowledge of Plant Nutrition

Use of radioactive phosphate fertilizer is helping scientists to discover many new things about plant nutrition, according to ____________________.
(State or local authority)

Because of the importance of this work, the U. S. Department of Agriculture, with the cooperation of the fertilizer industry and the Atomic Energy Commission, set up a small plant some time ago at the Beltsville, Md., Agricultural Research Center to produce radioactive phosphate fertilizers. This is done by mixing ordinary phosphate fertilizer with a radioactive element obtained from the Oak Ridge National Laboratory in Tennessee, reports ________________.

Fertilizer thus "tagged" can be traced even after it is taken up by plants and transformed into plant material. Radioactive fertilizer produced at Beltsville was used last year in 41 experiments in various parts of the United States and by co-operating agencies in Canada and India.

Here are some of the questions for which answers are being sought: How much phosphate fertilizer do crops need? What is the value of water-insoluble phosphate in mixed phosphates? What form of fertilizer--powdered, granular, or liquid--is used best? At what stage of growth and where should fertilizer be applied to do most good?

Here are some of the things that have been learned: Experiments with corn have shown that this plant uses a high proportion of phosphate from added fertilizer early in the growing season and very little at any other period of growth. On the other hand, potatoes absorb phosphate throughout the growing period.

The exact effects of fertilizer upon plants is being studied in many places and on many crops, says ________________, with ordinary as well as radioactive fertilizers. All this work is steadily accumulating knowledge that eventually will help farmers to apply just the right amounts of plant nutrients and at the right time to get the most production without waste.

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In Ark., Calif., Colo., Conn., Del., Fla., Ga., Ill., Ind., La., Md., Mass., Mich., Miss., Mo., N. J., N. Y., N. C., Ohio, Okla., Oreg., Pa., R. I., S. C., Tenn., Tex., Utah, Va., Wash., and Wis.

Proven Varieties Best for Commercial Tomato Production

In producing tomatoes for market, selection of proper varieties is of major importance, the ______________ (State) Agricultural Extension Service today reminded farmers planning commercial production of tomatoes this year.

"The choice of varieties is an important factor in successful tomato production and marketing," ______________________ (State or local authority) said. "In established tomato growing sections, varieties that are well adapted to the respective areas have been demonstrated through research and practical experience."

"Except for small experimental plantings of possibly superior varieties new to the section, growers would do well to confine production to those which have proved to be adapted to their area and possess the most desirable market qualities."

"Tomatoes larger than $3\frac{1}{4}$ inches in diameter are often badly ridged over the shoulders or are otherwise misshapen and will seldom command as high a price as those that range from $2\frac{1}{4}$ to $3\frac{1}{4}$ inches in diameter," said _________________.

Information on tomato varieties suitable for commercial production in ______________ (State) may be obtained from county agents.* Experiment stations and seedmen are continually breeding new varieties and selecting improved strains of existing varieties. Some of these may be adapted to your area.

*Note to editors: You may be able to list varieties suitable for production in your State.

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USDA 279 (1-56)

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U. S. Department of Agriculture

Special to Extension Editors

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In All States

Cattle Need Vitamin A To Maintain Health

Winter is a season when cattle rations are likely to contain insufficient vitamin A, says ________________________. This element is necessary
(State or local authority)
to the health and proper development of all animals, cattle included. It is particularly important for normal reproduction in cows.

Swelling of the joints and night blindness in cattle may be signals that the animals are not getting enough vitamin A, according to ________________. In advanced stages this deficiency can actually cause convulsions, though such severe cases are seldom seen.

Vitamin A is less likely to be short in the warmer seasons because green growing pastures and fresh yellow grain are excellent sources of carotene, a material which can be converted by cattle into vitamin A. In the winter, and in areas where supplies of green leafy forage and fresh yellow grain are limited, vitamin A can be supplied by including any of the following in the daily cattle ration: a few pounds of green leafy hay; small quantities of fish oil; or alfalfa meal or pellets.

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USDA 281 (1-56)

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MAR ... 1956
U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

In Minn., Wis., Iowa, Ill., Ind., Calif., Mich., Ohio, Mo.,
Tex., N. D., Nebr., Kans., and Okla.

Farmers Advised To Watch for Grasshopper Developments

Reports from the U. S. Department of Agriculture indicate that farmers will need to be on the lookout next spring for grasshoppers on midwestern and some western cropland. ____________________ (State or local authority) reports that hoppers are expected to be numerous in some parts of __________ (State), though weather conditions unfavorable to the insects' development may change that picture before the next growing season gets under way.

In the meantime, says ____________, __________ (State) farmers should be alert to the possibility of severe hopper infestations next spring and summer and be ready, if necessary, to take the proper control measures in time to stop heavy crop damage. This means being ready with power sprayers or dusters, and knowing where to obtain recommended insecticides in case of need.

A number of insecticides now available are effective in grasshopper control. Aldrin, chlordane, dieldrin, heptachlor, and toxaphene are among those listed. Methoxychlor should be used on fruits and vegetables and on pasture land, because of its lower relative toxicity. Spraying is usually more effective than dusting, but in either case the recommendations of the manufacturer should be carefully followed to avoid harmful residues on crops or danger to those applying the insecticides. County agents are a good source of information about specific measures to be used in any particular region or situation.

If conditions are favorable, young, wingless grasshoppers will begin hatching out of the eggs now resting underground about next April or May. Or, if the season is late, they may hatch as late as June, says ____________. Applications of insecticides should begin as soon as possible after hatching, and if the insects are numerous, several applications may be necessary. In applying insecticides, farmers should look for hatching grounds on roadsides, field margins, ditch banks, and unused land bordering croplands. Treatment of these areas will prevent hoppers from moving into the fields where such operations as plowing and disking may already have cut down the numbers of hatchable eggs.

________________ recommends that farmers should watch for later announcements about grasshopper developments in their area. If a severe infestation develops, meetings may be called to lay plans for area-wide control.

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USDA 282 (1-56)

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In All States

Swine May React Falsely to Brucellosis Test

Testing hogs for brucellosis is made somewhat more difficult by an unknown substance, present in the blood of some swine. This substance may cause swine to give a false "positive" reaction to the standard agglutination test used to diagnose the disease.

Cooperating Federal-State scientists, working under the direction of the University of Minnesota's School of Veterinary Medicine, have been studying this problem in an attempt to find what causes the false reactions. As a result, the scientists are convinced that a single test does not provide sufficient proof of the presence or absence of brucellosis in many swine herds.

When positive reactors are found in the first test performed on a breeding herd, at least two or more tests should be made as a basis for final diagnosis, the researchers report. If the potency of the reaction has not significantly increased in subsequent tests, as compared with the first test, no infection would be indicated. On the other hand, where 30 percent of the hogs show complete reaction at high levels and the remainder react to lower levels on the first herd test, brucellosis infection is undoubtedly present.

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USDA 311 (1-56)

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MAR 2 3 1956
U. S. OF AGRICULTURE

In All States

Farm Women Run Successful Co-op Market

Many a farm woman produces readily marketable goods in her own home and garden. For those who also have a flair for selling, these can be a source of added income.

Here's a marketing idea that might appeal to farm women located near enough to a city to make it practical, suggests ______________________.
(Local authority)

The Montgomery Farm Woman's Cooperative Market is described in the February issue of "News for Farmer Cooperatives," published by the U. S. Department of Agriculture, as the only farm woman's cooperative market of its kind in the world. Started in the depression of 1930, it has been a successful venture ever since. Located in Maryland, just outside Washington, D. C., the market, with 60 active members, does a yearly business of about $200,000. Most of the women in the market sell food they raise or prepare, but some also sell home-grown flowers and handmade articles. Three sell only flowers.

Today members of the cooperative - all farm women - own their own building in a desirable location. But they still have some problems. Taxes on the property are high. And farms are getting farther and farther away, as new sub-divisions and towns spread out into Montgomery County. Some of the women drive as far as 50 miles to get to the market, which is open only 2 days a week, Wednesday and Saturday.

Nevertheless, the Montgomery farm co-op women do not plan to move from their present location. Though they are bound together as a cooperative, each member sells her own goods, conducts her own sales, collects her money, and disposes of anything left at the end of a day. They pay to the co-op 5 percent of their sales and $3 a month table rent. At the end of the year, any earnings after taxes and other expenses are refunded to members in proportion to sales.

An unusual thing about this particular co-op is the international character of its customers. A special Thanksgiving open house held last November attracted visitors representing at least 22 countries. Many of these people, attached to embassies and legations in Washington, are regular customers of the market.

Other communities may offer different, but equally effective, marketing opportunities, says ____________________.

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USDA 317 (1-56)

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In All States

Timber Owners Advised To Study Markets Before Selling

Material from ____________ (State) woods is too frequently sold for considerably less than its real value, says ____________________, because lack of experience with estimating and selling timber puts owners at a disadvantage with timber buyers.

"Remember that it pays to study the markets and to sell measured timber," ____________________ reminds woodland owners.

County agricultural agents or local farm foresters are good sources of advice. They can help in determining the value of standing timber and in deciding which trees to sell and which to keep for improving the stand.

____________________ offers the following general suggestions to owners who wish to dispose of timber products:

1. Get prices from as many sawmills and wood industries as possible. Local markets sometimes pay better than outside markets because of transportation savings.
2. Advertise in papers to secure prices from outside purchasers.
3. Consider the responsibility of prospective purchasers to avoid slow payment, costly collections, and losses. Use a written timber-sale agreement in selling farm timber, particularly where cutting is done by purchaser.
4. Before selling, secure a good estimate of the amount and value of material for sale. Public or private consulting foresters can be found in almost every locality.
5. Market the high grades of timber instead of using them on the farm where cheaper material will serve as well. Markets that pay good prices usually buy on grade.
6. Standing timber does not deteriorate rapidly, so it pays to wait for favorable market conditions.

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In All States

Farm Fillers

In 1900 it took about 100 hours of work to produce 100 bushels of wheat. Today, it takes about 25 hours of work to produce 100 bushels of wheat.

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Agricultural attaches, stationed at 49 posts in foreign countries and working under the direction of the U. S. Department of Agriculture, are helping to develop markets abroad for United States farm products.

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Increased use of molasses in animal feeding, under way since 1949, continued in 1954 and 1955, reports the U. S. Department of Agriculture. The total quantity of molasses fed in calendar year 1955 reached a new high of 428 million gallons, about double the quantity fed 5 or 6 years ago. Large supplies at relatively favorable prices are responsible for this trend.

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Honey production in 1955 totaled 253 million pounds, 17 percent more than the short crop of 1954, reports the U. S. Department of Agriculture. Production per colony was 47.7 pounds, as compared with 39.8 pounds in 1954 and an average of 43.7 pounds for the years 1949-53.

Production was up in all regions of the country except the South Atlantic and West, where it was down 24 and 5 percent respectively from 1954.

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USDA 375 (2-56)

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Special to Extension Editors

In All States

Dairy Farm Numbers Decline; Yet Milk Supplies Are Record High

The number of United States farms selling milk is declining, reports the U. S. Department of Agriculture (or a local authority.) Yet total milk sales have reached a new record high, as sales per farm rapidly increase.

For the country as a whole, the number of farms reporting milk cows declined 19 percent from 1944 to 1950 and an additional 20 percent from 1950 to 1954.

Sales of whole milk per farm averaged 88,000 pounds per farm for the U. S. as a whole in 1954, an average of 240 pounds per day. The variation among States was very wide--from less than 30,000 in Tennessee to over 400,000 pounds for California and over 500,000 pounds for Florida. All States showed a higher average-per-farm production in 1954 than 5 years earlier, in some cases more than doubling the volume.

Part of this increased volume, according to the USDA, is the result of rising production per cow. The rest is due to larger numbers of cows per farm. The gain in average rate of production per cow -- between 1 and 2 percent each year over the past 15 years -- reflects improved quality of cows and better feeding and management.

In other words, both United States cows and United States dairy farmers are becoming more efficient.

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USDA 425 (2-56)

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Special to Extension Editors

In All States

U. S. Distributed 800,000,000 Pounds of Surplus Food in Last Half of 1955

The U. S. Department of Agriculture reports that almost 800 million pounds of this country's food surplus was donated to schoolchildren and needy persons in this country and abroad during the last half of 1955.

In this country, surplus food went to about 11 million schoolchildren, about 1 million persons in charitable institutions, 100,000 Indians, and about two and a quarter million persons in needy families. Altogether, food distributed to these groups totaled nearly 300 million pounds.

Foods were also distributed to hungry people in 70 foreign countries around the free world. Eighteen nongovernmental United States welfare agencies took part in this disposal, distributing almost 500 million pounds of food during the latter half of 1955.

Food given away in this country is handled through State facilities, with the State government taking full charge and responsibility for the distribution. Needs in this country are given priority, and sufficient quantities are reserved to satisfy all requests from State governments.

Several new developments point to disposal of even greater quantities of surplus food this year. The Department of Agriculture has purchased more than 102 million pounds of pork products which are now being distributed. Public Law 311, of the 84th Congress, authorizes distribution of wheat flour and cornmeal as a strictly domestic relief measure, and first shipments have already been made under this law, with much more expected to follow. The Department has also announced that wheat and corn have been added to commodities available to schools and charitable institutions, and wheat, corn, rice, and dry beans are now available for foreign shipment.

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Special to Extension Editors

In Ala., Ark., Calif., Conn., Del., Fla., Ga., Ill., Ind., La., Maine, Md.,
Miss., Mo., N. C., Oreg., Pa., S. C., Tex., Va., Wash., and W. Va.

New Mechanical Device Can Cut Labor in Poultry-Packing Plants

The U. S. Department of Agriculture and Georgia State agricultural engineers have worked out a means to save time and eliminate one of the most disliked tasks in poultry-packing plants.

Their "invention," described by ______________________ (State or local authority), is a mechanical device designed to transfer birds from the chill tank to the packing table without individual handling. It works by simply lifting and tipping the drained tank far enough to allow the poultry to slide down a chute onto the packing table.

Emptying the poultry chill tank is a laborious, disagreeable, and time-consuming job in most poultry-packing plants. A worker doing the job manually, as is the practice in most plants, must stoop repeatedly and handle chilled birds with fragments of ice clinging to them, as he transfers them from tank to table.

The mechanical tank tipper designed to eliminate this manual labor is adaptable to most poultry plants. It can be used in congested space, since it requires only a little more area than that needed for doing the same operation by hand and it demands a ceiling height of only 9 feet.

Time studies show that approximately 10 minutes are required to empty an average tank of birds manually. The mechanical tipper empties a tank in from 10 to 15 seconds without the discomfort of handling ice-encrusted poultry. The time saved allows the operator to prepare another full tank of birds for tipping while the previous tank full is being packed. In this way a constant supply of birds is available for the packers, eliminating waiting time between tanks.

One disadvantage of the tipper, as shown in actual testing of the device, is that some residue ice is dumped on the table with the birds. This disadvantage can be overcome, however, by using a packing table designed to permit the melting ice to run off into a drain as the birds are packed.

Pictures and a more complete description of the mechanical tipper is available from AMS Information, U. S. Department of Agriculture, Washington 25, D. C.

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AL RECORD

In All States

Labor Needs Vary Greatly Among Farm Products

Despite a general tendency to substitute machinery and more efficient methods for hand labor in farm production, it still requires a lot of man-hours to produce some agricultural products. Opportunities for mechanization, explains ______________ (State or local authority), have not been equally available to all types of farming.

On the average, according to ______________ it takes a great many more man-hours of labor to produce any given value in tobacco, milk, and cotton, than it takes to produce the same value in hogs, broilers, and wheat. A recent study by the U. S. Department of Agriculture shows that in 1955 it took about 63 man-hours of labor to produce $100 worth of tobacco, 53 man-hours to produce $100 worth of milk, and 52 man-hours for $100 worth of cotton. On the other end of the scale, producing $100 worth of hogs required only 18 man-hours of labor, of broilers---13 man-hours, and of wheat---only 11 man-hours.

These are averages, of course, and individual farms might show wide variations from the general pattern. Then too, this picture will change, suggests ______________, as machinery and other devices designed to save labor become more widely adopted in production of tobacco, milk, cotton, and other high labor users.

Across the Nation, the number of farmworkers has decreased about one-eighth in the last 5 years, and last year there were only around two-thirds as many farmworkers as 20 years earlier, says ______________.

Partial explanation for this general trend lies in the big increase in farm wage rates as compared with the less rapid rise in prices of things that can be substituted for labor. Last year, ______________ points out, prices of farm machinery, motor supplies, and vehicles, including tractors, averaged about twice as high as in 1938-40, just before World War II. At the same time, farm wage rates were four times as high. Thus labor-saving devices often cut total costs.

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U. S. Department of Agriculture

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U. S. AGRICULTURE

Special to Extension Editors

All States

Adding Nitrogen Does Not Speed Plant Decay

Adding nitrogen to the soil after crops are harvested for the purpose of speeding up the decay of crop residues does not pay. So says U. S. Department of Agriculture soil scientist F. E. Allison (or a State or local authority).

Studies carried out by USDA scientists indicate that there is usually sufficient nitrogen present, even in relatively poor soils, to feed the organisms (microbes) that convert crop residues into humus. There is no need, therefore, to add nitrogen for this purpose.

The scientists caution, however, that if another crop is grown while this process is taking place, it must compete with the humus-producing organisms for the nitrogen present in the soil. Interestingly enough, the soil organisms will get their share first, and the crop may be nitrogen starved.

Feed your crops nitrogen, advises ____________________, but let the residues take care of themselves. If a new crop is grown immediately after a preceding crop, adding nitrogen is particularly important in order to save the crop from competing with soil organisms for nitrogen present in the soil. But in a normal overwinter fallowing period, crop residues will have broken down enough to remove most of this competition.

Soil testing is the best way to find how much nitrogen and other fertilizer should be added to your soil for growing crops, suggests ____________________.

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MAR 30 1956
U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

All States

Weedkiller May Have Other Uses

The chemical 2,4,5-TP, best known as a weedkiller, has shown itself, experimentally, to be effective in setting fruit on Anjou pear trees.

Results are still too inconclusive for recommendation, but new uses for this relatively new chemical may be in the offing, reports ____________________.

The Anjou is a high quality, but often low yielding, variety of pear owing to its characteristic failure to set a capacity crop of fruit. The only remedy has been severe pruning of the tree, which reduces the amount of fruiting wood while stimulating fruit set. A better method could make this pear more profitable to producers.

In some instances in Oregon and Washington experiments, 2,4,5-TP increased yield of Anjou pears as much as 60 percent. Spraying trees in late August and early September led to greater fruit set the following summer.

When tried with Bartlett pears, however, 2,4,5-TP caused fruit breakdown and it could not be used. Results with the Anjou pear also were inconsistent. This points to the need for more testing under widely varied conditions, says ____________________, before any recommendations can be made regarding the use of 2,4,5-TP for fruit setting.

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NEWS SERVICE FOR WEEKLIES

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U. S. [illegible] OF AGRICULTURE

All States

More Selective Weedkillers Being Developed

New chemical weedkillers which can be used in new ways are being developed by agricultural science, reports ____________________.
(State or local authority)

Established weedkillers such as 2,4-D; 2,4,5-T; and MCPA are now being used on an estimated 30 million acres of cultivated land each year, plus thousands of acres of range and grassland, says Mr. ________________. But there are many situations in which these chemicals are unsatisfactory because of the damage they may do to sensitive crops. Among the sensitive crops are such important ones as cotton, seedling legumes (alfalfa, clover, lespedeza), tomatoes, snapbeans, and, to a lesser degree, others such as corn and soybeans.

Two new weedkillers, one--4(2,4-DB), related to 2,4-D--and the other--4(MCPB), related to MCPA--are showing good possibilities in tests being conducted cooperatively by the U. S. Department of Agriculture and numerous State experiment stations. Until further tests are conducted, neither of these new chemicals is recommended for use on farm crops, but findings so far look extremely encouraging, says ________________.

In Montana, 4(MCPB) has killed broadleaved weeds in canning peas and in established stands of alfalfa and white clover without reducing yields of these legumes. In Missouri, 4(2,4-DB) controlled weeds well in birdsfoot trefoil. In Mississippi, both chemicals gave good control of weeds in a pasture of white clover and dallisgrass without crop injury. Also, 4(MCPB) was found to be much less toxic to cotton than the older chemicals. In Arkansas, the new chemicals killed weeds in ricefields with less injury to rice than that from other herbicides, and in Wyoming 4(MCPB) killed pigweed and lambsquarter without injury to irrigated alfalfa and snapbeans.

These examples indicate that farmers can look forward to more and more help from agricultural research in controlling unwanted plant growth, predicts ________________.

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MAR 29 1956
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In Conn., Ill., Ind., Iowa, Maine, Mass., Mich., Minn., Mont., Nebr.,
N. H., N. J., N. Y., N. Dak., Ohio, Oreg., Pa., R. I., S. Dak.,
Vt., Wash., Wisc., and Wyo.

Suggestions for Spring Lawns

For ____________ (State) homeowners planning to make a new lawn this spring, or improve an established lawn, here are a few suggestions from ____________ (State or local authority).

Seed mixtures containing large quantities of annual grasses with perennial grasses are not a good buy. The faster growing annual grass may crowd out the perennial grass and retard establishment of a permanent lawn, says ____________. Prices for most perennial grasses are considerably below average this year.

Grasses or grass mixtures should be suited to your lawn conditions, according to ____________. Bluegrass alone will thrive in full sun if there is sufficient moisture and fertility. Fescues are more resistant to both drought and shade and should be mixed with bluegrass in proportion to the shade or dryness present. For light shade or slight droughtiness, for instance, a mixture of 25 percent red fescue and 75 percent Kentucky bluegrass should be satisfactory. For shady areas, a mixture of 75 percent red fescue and 25 percent Kentucky bluegrass is a good combination.

To maintain a good sod with Kentucky bluegrass or bluegrass-and-fescue mixtures, grass should be mowed no shorter than 1½ inches, and fertilizer should be applied at the rate of 3 to 5 pounds of actual nitrogen per 1,000 square feet of lawn each year.

Sprinkling a new lawn lightly every day helps it to become established. Light, frequent sprinkling is not recommended once the lawn is established, because it encourages shallow rooting and competition from crabgrass.

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USDA 728 (3-56)

NEWS SERVICE FOR WEEKLIES

U. S. Department of Agriculture

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MAR 30 1956
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All States

Look at Other Farmers' Plans in Making Your Own

"How much corn, wheat, potatoes, and so on that other farmers intend to plant is worth thinking about. It will have an effect on the marketability and value of your own crops," says ________________.

"To give such information, the Federal-State Crop Reporting Service issues a report each March on prospective plantings for the current year," ____________ ____________ reminds ______________ (State) farmers. "The report is popularly known as the March Intentions Report, and its purpose is to let individual farmers know the thinking and preliminary plans of all the other farmers. Then, if a farmer thinks he would be better off shifting partially to another crop, he has the opportunity to do so."

"You may get information based upon the March Intentions Report from your local newspaper or radio or from your county agent," says ________________. "Or if you wish to obtain the information direct, you may write to your State statistician,* ________________ at ________________."

The facts included in the report come from the Crop and Livestock Reporting Service. This service is offered to farmers by the U. S. Department of Agriculture in cooperation with State departments of agriculture and State agricultural colleges.

The report covers about 150 commodities and is based on information from some 600,000 experienced farmers and ranchers in the 48 States who serve as crop or livestock reporters. Additional information is furnished by local merchants, ginners, mills, elevators, warehouses, hatcheries, dairy plants, and meat packers.

"Naturally, the March Intentions Report is based upon preliminary plans, and farmers may actually plant less--or more--than the report indicates," ________________ points out. "It is to help farmers make profitable adjustments that the report is published."

*Note to Editors: The name and address of your State statistician is given on the attached list.

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All States

Signs of Soil Washing Indicate Need for Conservation Measures

Most modern farmers recognize gullies and large silt deposits as trouble that requires attention if their soil is to remain productive. But there are many less obvious signs of erosion that will eventually eat away profits as well as soil if not corrected, suggests ______________________.
(State or local authority)

"If these telltale signs appear on your land," says ______________, "your county agent or local soil conservation district can give you assistance in finding how to overcome the problem."

Following are some of the less recognized signs of erosion described by ____________________ as trouble signals.

Appearance of new stones and gravel on the surface after a field has once been cleared is usually a sign that fine soil has washed away from over and around the stones. Frost heaving may bring small stones to the surface in poorly drained areas, but if the soil beneath a flat stone is a little higher than the surrounding soil, forming a small pedestal under the stone, it is an indication that surrounding soil has washed away.

Further exposure of boulders or bedrock also indicates a lowered soil surface. For the same reason, plows may strike tile drains that were originally laid deep enough to be safe from damage.

Exposed tree roots are another sign of soil washing, since tree roots do not ordinarily grow above the surface. And bare spots often develop on pastures where close grazing and trampling by livestock have paved the way for erosion.

On many knobs, ridges, and upper slopes, crops are of poorer quality than those grown on the area below. Leaves are lighter colored, plants are shorter, and yields are lower. Low fertility and lack of moisture resulting from loss of topsoil cause these conditions. Soil accumulating above trees, stones, and hedges on a slope is further proof of soil loss from the upper areas.

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All States

Broilers Have Become Big Business

Farmers produced well over a billion broilers in 1955, compared with only 143 million in 1940. Their value was over 10 times the $72,000,000 grossed by the 1940 broiler producers.

It used to be that chickens for eating were produced for the most part in fairly small farm flocks, mainly as a byproduct from egg production. But in the past decade and a half, broilers have become a mass production business.

____________________ suggests that much of this change has been due to
(State or local authority)
contract financing.

A small (by today's standards) sideline flock of 3,000 to 5,000 broilers requires about $2,000 to $3,000 of working capital, on the average, according to ____________. A flock of 12,000 to 15,000 birds, which could take the full time of one man, requires around $7,000 capital before the birds are fully grown. It takes about 9 to 11 weeks to raise a flock of broilers to market size, and financial risks are greater than in most farm businesses.

For this reason, contract financing has become a rather familiar pattern in the 22 important broiler States,* ____________ reports. Under the contract system, someone other than the farmer may provide chicks, feed, medications, even buildings and equipment. The farmer provides his labor and management ability, and possibly his buildings and equipment. When the broilers are sold, profits are divided in a proportion agreed upon in the contract--frequently about 25 percent to the investor and 75 percent to the farmer.

Other financing plans provide for the investor to pay the farmer so much per week for boarding the chickens, regardless of the price of poultry meat, or so much per pound for broiler meat produced. Under either type plan, bonuses may be provided for better-than-average efficiency.

Many broiler producers have found that contract financing provides a chance of income at small risk and a way to use family labor. It also may train the farmer in a new skill if the investor--frequently a feed dealer or hatcheryman--provides supervision and advice on the best methods of feeding and caring for chicks.

Consumers, too, have benefited from an expanding broiler industry, says ____________, because of the larger supplies of a favored meat at moderate prices.

*Ala., Ark., Calif., Conn., Fla., Ga., Ill., Ind., Kans., La., Maine, Md., Miss., Mo., N. C., Oreg., Pa., S. C., Tex., Va., Wash., W. Va.

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All States

Farm Fillers

A good example of how teamwork among local, State, and Federal agencies and private interests pays off is shown in the progress that has been made in tree planting and woodland conservation practices, says ______________ (State or local authority).

Spurred on by increasing demands for the "green gold" represented in pulp and other wood products, local soil district cooperators have planted trees on approximately 1-3/4 million acres in the past 5 years, including 15,000 miles of windbreaks.

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The total area covered by local soil conservation districts has passed the one-and-a-half billion acre mark, reports __________________. About 80 percent of all the land in the United States is now within conservation district boundaries, including 85 percent of all farmland and 90 percent, in number, of all farms and ranches. A third of the States* are completely covered by conservation districts, which now number 2,700.

* Ala., S. C., Del., R. I., N. H., Vt., N. J., Mass., Nebr., Miss., Iowa, Conn., Kans., Ky., N. C., Ark., Virgin Islands, Puerto Rico.

Note to Editors: The facts here were taken from a recent speech by Donald A. Williams, Administrator of the U. S. Soil Conservation Service.

USDA 785 (3-56)

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All States

Farm Fillers

Planting steep slopes to trees protects the land and puts it to good use. With the Nation's timber supply shrinking, this is not only sound land use, but good economy as well, says ______________________.
(State or local authority)

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Improved pasture helps to stabilize the soil and stores fertility for future use.

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Seventy percent of all goods sold at retail each year are made up of items coming from the soil.

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Use of water for all purposes in the United States has doubled twice in the last 50 years and is expected to double again in the next 25 years.

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The first soil conservation district in the United States was organized in Anson and Union Counties, North Carolina, on August 4, 1937. The district's first cooperator, F. Y. Sorrell, is still active in farming.

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USDA 786 (3-56)

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All States

Farm Real Estate Values Continue Moderate Rise Despite Lower Farm Prices

Farm real estate values in ______________ (State)* continued to rise (remained about the same, or dropped slightly) during the latter part of 1955, according to a report just issued by the U. S. Department of Agriculture.

During the four-month period from July 1 to November 1, farm real estate values increased from 2 to 4 percent in 31 States and remained essentially unchanged in 16 States. In ______________ (State) the increase was _____ percent.

Compared with a year earlier, farm real estate values in ______________ (State) were up _____ percent as of November 1. This compares with a nationwide rise of 5 percent during the same period. Values last November averaged higher than a year earlier in all but two States--Nevada and Utah.

Continued business prosperity and strong demand by farmers for additional land to enlarge their farms have helped to offset expected effects on land values of lower prices for farm commodities, according to the USDA report.

Many farmers and non-farmers continue to view farmland as a safe and desirable investment despite current lower returns. Present owners apparently share this view because the number of farms for sale continued at a low level.

* Changes for your State are given on maps on pages 1 and 2 of the attached report.

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All States

Chemicals Will Aid in Controlling Crabgrass and Broadleaved Weeds in Lawns

The most effective way to control weeds in lawns, according to ______________ (State or local authority), is to plant lawn grasses adapted to your area and lawn conditions and then to fertilize adequately, water when needed, and mow frequently to the height recommended for the grasses you use.

As a supplement to these good lawn practices, chemical weedkillers are a useful aid in controlling crabgrass and broadleaved weeks, says ______________. But new weeds will replace the old if the turf is not kept in a healthy and vigorous condition.

For spring treatment of lawns in areas where crabgrass is a problem, ______________ suggests a combination of herbicides that will control the crabgrass as well as weeds such as dandelions, plantain, curled dock, wild onion, chickweed, and henbit. Killing broadleaved weeds alone permits crabgrass to move in and infest the spots where the weeds were growing.

To make a satisfactory spray mixture for spring control of crabgrass and weeds*, use 2 gallons of water and add 2 ounces or 4 tablespoons of phenyl mercuric acetate (PMA), using any commercial product containing 10 percent PMA. Add to this 1 ounce or 2 tablespoons of an amine salt of 2,4-D (any commercial product containing 4 pounds of 2,4-D per gallon of concentrate). Thoroughly mixed together this will treat 1,000 square feet of lawn area.

This treatment should be repeated, omitting the 2,4-D from the mixture, at 7- to 10-day intervals until 3 applications have been made. The first treatment with the PMA-2,4-D combination should be applied as soon as possible after crabgrass appears and while it is still in the two-leaf stage of growth.

Potassium cyanate (KOCN) at 3-1/2 ounces or 7 tablespoons may be used to replace PMA in the treatments described above. MCPA at the same rate of application suggested for 2,4-D may be used instead of 2,4-D.

*This formulation was worked out in cooperation with the Weed Investigation Section, Agricultural Research Service, USDA.

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All States

Shade Trees May Cause Lawn Problems

Shaded areas under trees frequently present a problem to homeowners who like to maintain a well-kept lawn. Here are some suggestions from ____________ (State or local authority) (or the U. S. Department of Agriculture) for improving the turf in these shaded spots.

The principal causes of poor grass under trees, explains ____________, are competition from tree roots for moisture and plant food, the shading effect of the tree foliage, and smothering by fallen leaves.

Competition for moisture and plant food can be overcome by watering sufficiently to soak the soil to a depth of several inches during dry periods and by fertilizing. A heavier-than-usual application of fertilizer beneath the tree will take care of the tree's needs as well as the grass.

Use of shade-tolerant species of grass will overcome the shading effects. Red fescue and trivialis bluegrass are recommended for cool, humid regions (generally north of Washington, D. C.), and Zoysia grasses and St. Augustine grass are recommended for warm, humid regions.*

Prompt raking and removal of fallen leaves is important to avoid smothering grass. Wherever possible, grass should be forced into rapid growth during the period when the leaves are off the trees in order to establish a strong turf before the area becomes shaded. This can be done by fertilizing and watering as necessary in the early spring and fall.

If grass will not grow in your shaded areas despite adequate fertilization and other precautions, then it will probably prove more satisfactory to plant a ground cover such as vinca, pachysandra, or thyme, suggests ____________.

*Note to Editors: Your specialist can recommend the best shade-tolerant species for your State.

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Editors

All States

Application for 1956 Wool Payments Must Be Mailed by April 30

Wool sales made before April 1, 1956, are eligible for incentive payments this year, provided the application is in the mail by April 30, ______________ ______________, chairman of the ______________ Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Committee, reminds wool producers.

Payments this year, explains ______________, will apply to wool sales made after March 31, 1955, and before April 1, 1956, and for which application is mailed by April 30, 1956.

______________ urges wool growers to be especially careful to provide the required sales record in submitting applications for incentive payments. For shorn wool, the sales record must show the name and address of the buyer, date of sale, name and address of the producer, the net weight of wool sold, and the net proceeds to the producer after normal deductions.

In the case of lambs and yearlings sold for slaughter unshorn, the application must be accompanied with a bill of sale giving name and address of slaughterer; date of sale; name and address of the seller; and the number, description, and net live weight of animals sold. The applicant must have a certification from the buyer that the animals were bought for slaughter and that they had or had not been shorn at the time of sale. To be eligible for payment, the applicant must have owned the animals for at least 30 days before selling them for slaughter.

Local ASC offices can supply application forms and answer any questions about the wool program.

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USDA 848 (3-56)

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In N. C., S. C., Ga., Ala., Fla., Miss., La., Ark., Tenn.

Better Tillage Methods Increase Possibilities for Producing Two Crops Annually

Revised methods of planting, developed through State and Federal cooperative research in North Carolina and Mississippi, increase the future practicality of a system of double crop production of small grains and soybeans in Southern States.

Results of the double-crop plan in North Carolina, reports ____________ (State or local ____________ authority), show that when the second crop is planted as soon as possible after the first crop is harvested, yields of each crop are only slightly less than that from plantings made at the optimum date for single crops. The combined return from the two crops is much better than the return would be from either as a single crop.

Till planting, a method used for double cropping during the past 2 years in North Carolina, has given good results in reducing soil-preparation costs, conserving moisture in sandy loam or heavy clay soil, providing stands when rainfall is short, and discouraging weeds. The till planter features sweeps mounted ahead of the drive wheels that break the soil without inverting it, shear off roots, and mix residues with soil. Rear equipment opens, fertilizes, seeds, and closes the furrow. A press wheel firms the row to make sure seeds get moisture.

Soybeans were planted in North Carolina after the wheat harvest about mid-June. The recommended single-crop planting season is May 1 to 20. In 1954, when there was little rainfall from 2 weeks before to 2 weeks after planting, it was necessary to irrigate soybeans planted in the usual manner in order to obtain a stand. By contrast, till-planted beans produced good stands without irrigation. Yields were equal for the two methods.

In Mississippi experiments, according to ______________, a double-disk opener was used to replace the conventional sword opener on the standard planter. The disk opener penetrates heavy clay soil and permits placing soybean seeds in moisture so that plants emerge immediately without rain and grow ahead of the weeds.

Because of the problem of getting stands, many growers in Mississippi have preferred to plant beans in early April when there is greater likelihood of rains. With the double-disk opener, satisfactory stands can be obtained in May, without rain, and May plantings produce consistently better results than earlier plantings.

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In N. C., S. C., Ga., Fla., Miss., Ala., Tenn., Ark., La., Va.

In Cotton, Weed Control With Chemicals and Flaming Can Cut Labor Needs

A combination of herbicidal-oil spraying and flaming can give effective, economical weed control and considerably reduce the labor needed for growing cotton. This has been shown in 6 years of experiments at the Delta Branch Experiment Station in Stoneville, Miss.

The work in Mississippi will be of interest to ______________ cotton growers who have mechanized their operations except for weed control, and have found that they are still dependent upon a relatively large labor force, says ______________ (State or local authority). In wet seasons demand for labor is greater, and labor costs are consequently higher.

Releasing labor used for hand hoeing and cultivating cotton should also, according to ______________, give many planters the opportunity they have been seeking to diversify their operations with enterprises such as forage and livestock farming.

The spray-flaming combination, as practiced successfully in Mississippi, consists of 3 herbicidal-oil sprays at intervals of 5 to 8 days, starting when cotton is 3 inches tall, followed by 2 or 3 flamings.

An additional practice that might be considered is the application of a 12-inch band of preemergence-type herbicide CIPC over the row while planting cotton, suggests ______________. In Mississippi this kept weeds down effectively for 6 to 8 weeks and practically eliminated hoeing. The CIPC treatment is rather costly, so, while it reduces the weed problem, it does not reduce the cost of control. Also, it is less needed in dry seasons when weeds are fewer. But it might be worthwhile to insure the cotton crop, year after year, against the occasional weedy conditions that prove so costly in rainy seasons.

All these weed-control practices must be carried out carefully and in accordance with directions or they may injure the cotton or fail to control weeds, warns ______________. The ___________ (State) Agricultural Experiment Station (or other source) can advise growers about the desirability of a spray-and-flame program in meeting specific farm needs.

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All States

Farm Fillers

Farms in the United States now number 4,782,000, according to the summary of the 1954 Census of Agriculture released recently by the U. S. Department of Commerce. This represents a decline of 600,000 since 1950. The number of farms declined from 1950 to 1954 in every State except Florida, and in all except of 180 of the 3,067 counties in the United States. There are now fewer farms than at any time since 1890.

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U. S. citizens use between 23 and 24 pounds of soap and synthetic detergents per person per year. Use of synthetic detergents rose to 15 pounds per person last year while soap dropped to about 8 pounds. Ten years earlier soap consumption totaled 23 pounds per person and synthetic detergents a mere pound per person. These figures are from the Agricultural Marketing Service of the U. S. Department of Agriculture.

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Farmers' intentions as of March 1 indicate a new high in soybean plantings and some increase over last year in flaxseed acreage, reports the U. S. Department of Agriculture. Meanwhile the market for U. S. oilseeds and fats and oils is strong due to a record world demand.

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Prices to farmers for milk and butterfat changed little last year and will not change much in the coming year, barring widespread drought, according to the Agricultural Marketing Service of the U. S. Department of Agriculture. With larger scales from a record level of milk production, cash receipts increased slightly in 1955 and probably will show another such small increase in 1956.

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Inadequate Protein May Upset Reproduction In Cows

Scientists at the U. S. Department of Agriculture's Beltsville, Md., Research Center are exploring the effects on cattle reproduction rates of varying levels of protein in the diet. These same scientists, in a previous study, discovered that adequate quantities of carotene (the nutrient in green forage that the animals convert into vitamin A) is essential to normal reproduction in cows. Their present studies will show whether small calf crops in some areas can be attributed to a lack of sufficient protein in natural feeds available there.

Preliminary results indicate that a low-protein diet may upset normal reproduction functions in cows. Among cows observed thus far, those fed lower-than-recommended levels of protein came into heat slower and the interval between calvings was longer.

Also, calves born of cows fed low-protein diets, while not significantly different in weight at birth from calves born of cows receiving higher rates of protein, averaged 40 or more pounds lighter than the others at weaning time, six months later.

Use of protein supplements in some low-protein areas has not increased calf crops to the desired level. The present work may show the kind and amount of protein needed, as well as the best time and method of supplementing the natural diet.

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All States

Breeding Good Beef Cattle Calls for Topnotch Foundation Stock, Plus Strict Culling

Topnotch foundation stock and a program of continuous and careful culling of animals that fail to equal or improve upon their parents are necessary in breeding superior lines of beef cattle, says ______________________.
(State or local authority)

These requirements are pointed up by research being carried out by United States Department of Agriculture at its range livestock experiment station in Miles City, Mont. Selection and line breeding over a period of 20 years has enabled researchers there to increase the average level of many desirable characteristics in individuals and specific lines of cattle.

A 10-year comparison of steers sired at the station by a single line of inbred bulls stands out as an example of the degree to which desirable characteristics can be improved.

Four groups of steers, started in the feedlot at weaning weights averaging 442 pounds, gained an average of 1.99 pounds daily, weighing 904 pounds out of the feedlot, and ate 586 pounds of grain for each 100 pounds of gain. Ten years later another group of steers sired by a full of the same inbred line was checked. They averaged 456 pounds at weaning, gained 2.48 pounds daily, weighed 1,064 pounds out of the feedlot, and used 593 pounds of grain per 100 pounds of gain.

The daily gain for the latter group was 25 percent greater and the final weight 160 pounds more per steer. The slightly greater quantity of feed used by the latter group is chargeable to the usual reduced feed efficiency in cattle as fattening increases.

Other characteristics, such as milking ability and carcass quality, are also being improved in the breeding research work at Miles City. Like ability to gain, neither of these characteristics can be judged accurately by selecting animals for thickness of fleshing, body type, and uniformity. These factors are still considered useful in selecting for desirable characteristics, but they don't tell the whole story.

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In Ala., Ark., Conn., Del., Fla., Ga., Ill., Ind., Ky., La., Maine,
Md., Mass., Mich., Miss., Mo., N. H., N. J., N. Y., N. C., Ohio,
Pa., R. I., S. C., Tenn., Vt., Va., and W. Va.

Land Leveling Is Becoming a Familiar Farm Practice

Land leveling, a common practice in the irrigated areas of the West, is becoming more familiar to Eastern farm areas, reports _____________. New research and farm experience indicate that this practice can improve the land on many farms in this part of the country, even when irrigation is not used.

Grading and smoothing an area to remove natural pockets and depressions erases scars made by farming implements, and provides a basis for a continuous and uniform row grade. This aids in uniform irrigation and drainage with an even, non-erosive water flow, according to _____________. The smooth uniform surface also makes precision planting, cultivation, and harvesting easier, and reduces wear on both machines and operators.

In most instances, large volumes of soil needed to fill depressions can be taken from areas where the topsoil is deeper than average owing to development of headlands, back furrows, and spoil banks. In the few instances where topsoil is reduced in depth by the leveling operation, a well-planned program for soil fertility and organic matter management, coupled with the improved drainage resulting from the leveling, quickly offsets yield decreases.

One possibility for severe damage to soil through leveling and grading lies in carrying out the operation when the soil is not sufficiently dry for normal tillage, _____________ cautions. Handling wet soil with heavy equipment quickly causes severe compaction.

In general, it pays to have professional advice and aid in carrying out land-leveling operations, says _____________. Careful topographic surveys are needed to assure precision work with the least expenditure of time and energy.

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All States

U. S. Barters Surplus Agricultural Commodities for Needed Foreign Goods

Since March 1950, surplus United States farm commodities worth over $400 million have been traded, with no exchange of currency, for needed foreign materials under the Commodity Credit Corporation's barter program reports ____________________. Contracts now outstanding will bring these barter exports to more than a half-billion dollars.

The agricultural products exported under this program, according to ____________________, have included most of those held by the Government in large quantities--wheat, corn, grain, sorghums, barley, flaxseed, oats, rye, tobacco, cottonseed oil, peanuts, dried skim milk, linseed oil, cottonseed meal, soybeans, rice, and cotton. Wheat has accounted for more than half the total on a value basis.

Materials acquired by the United States through these barter transactions are both strategic and nonstrategic. Strategic materials include antimony metal, beryl ore, cadmium, industrial diamonds, high carbon ferrochrome, ferrochromiumsilicon, ferromanganese, fluorspar, crude iodine, manganese ore, and palladium. The nonstrategic materials include such things as fertilizer and cotton yarn.

Barter transactions are carried out through regular commercial trade channels by private United States firms. Materials have been exported to 29 friendly countries.

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USDA 1029 (4-56)

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Agriculture To Be Considered in President's Conference on Occupational Safety

This year, for the first time, agriculture is included in the work groups to be considered by the President's Conference on Occupational Safety, reports ______________________ (State or local authority). The conference, which has been held at 2-year intervals, will meet in Washington, D. C., from May 14 to 16.

Other occupational classifications with which the conference will be concerned, according to ____________________, include construction, manufacturing, public utilities, trade, finance, service, and government. Secretary of Labor James P. Mitchell will serve as general conference chairman.

The U. S. Department of Agriculture will cooperate by sponsoring a Farm Safety Clinic on May 15, as part of the conference program. The purpose of the clinic is to develop for the President an appraisal of all possible resources for safeguarding farm people from accidents on their farms, in their homes, and on rural highways. Farm leaders of safety work from all the States* will attend the clinic and contribute their thinking about how to plan for the best use of all available assistance to help farm people prevent accidents.

In announcing the farm safety clinic, Secretary of Agriculture Ezra Taft Benson said, "Farm safety is of vital interest to us in agriculture because of the increased hazards now associated with farming as a result of the tremendous expansion in mechanization. Agriculture now exceeds all other industries in the annual toll of fatal accidents."

In 1955, there were 310,000 disabling injuries and 3,700 deaths resulting from farm work accidents.

*Kirk Fox, Des Moines, Iowa, Editor of Successful Farming Magazine, will act as moderator. Other participants include: Jerry Ringo, winner of the Kentucky FFA Public Speaking Award; Mrs. Almer Armstrong, chairman, Indiana Farm Safety Committee; Ordie L. Hogsett, Illinois farm safety extension specialist; E. C. Martin, Texas Farm and Ranch Safety Committee; Harry Pontious, director of safety, Nationwide Insurance Co.; and Mrs. Goode Robinson, chairman, Virginia Federation of Home Demonstration Clubs, Lynchburg, Va.

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In North Dakota, South Dakota, Montana, Wyoming, and Nebraska

Survival of Shelterbelt Trees Encouraged by Good Spacing and Care

Windbreaks and shelterbelts are a necessity on the northern Great Plains for winter protection of farm yards and buildings, but establishing trees and shrubs in this part of the country is often a difficult achievement, says ____________.

Studies carried out by the U. S. Department of Agriculture at its Northern Great Plains Field Station at Mandan, N. Dak., over almost four decades show how some methods of spacing and caring for trees encourage maximum growth and high survival over a long period of time.

Results of these studies, reports ____________, lead to the following recommendations on methods of growing shelterbelt trees in the northern Great Plains:

1. Rows should be spaced a minimum of 12 feet apart, and trees 6 to 8 feet apart in the row.

2. Trees with spreading crowns, such as willow and boxelder, should not be planted next to a shrub species unless the distance between rows is such that there will be no danger of the shrub being overtopped.

3. Shrubs in the outside rows should not be pruned. Trees in interior rows should be pruned to one stem, but no side branches should be removed from the stem that is left. Trees with lower branches removed are less satisfactory for holding wind and snow than trees allowed to grow unpruned.

4. Competitive weed and grass growth is best controlled by cultivation. Mulching was found to be unsatisfactory because mulch applications brought a new crop of weeds and grass which could only be controlled by more mulch or hand-cutting. Mulching also prevented light rainfall from reaching the soil and encouraged shallow rooting of both trees and shrubs. In addition, it was a fire hazard and it harbored rodents that sometimes partially girdled the trees. Complete absence of any method of weed control gave better results than mulching, but noncultivation was less satisfactory than clean cultivation.

County agricultural agents can advise farmers about the best species of trees and shrubs for any specific location and area, reminds ______________.

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All States

Medical Research May Lead to New U. S. Crops

Search for new plant materials for U. S. crops is sometimes stimulated by discoveries in fields outside agriculture. The following examples of this are related by ________________________.

A few years ago, when the value of cortisone for treating arthritis was discovered, the U. S. Department of Agriculture began a world search for plant sources of the drug. A rich store was found in the tropical yam, Dioscorea, that grows wild in Central America. This set in motion related studies, which are still proceeding, of soil and climatic requirements, planting practices, equipment for handling, and other research connected with establishment of a new domestic crop.

More recently, ________________________ reports, medical research has focused attention on another plant drug that is showing promise of wide usefulness in treating mental illness and high blood pressure.

The best known source of this drug is the root of Rauwolfia serpentina, a plant used for centuries in India to treat fevers and snakebite. Heavy demands for Rauwolfia on the world market have led the Indian Government to place an embargo on these plants. As a result pharmaceutical companies are looking for large and dependable sources of supply.

Rauwolfia has been part of the plant collection at the Department of Agriculture's Glenn Dale, Md., Plant Introduction Station for many years. The plants there are now being increased for use in studies to determine whether Rauwolfia could be produced as an economic crop in this country.

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Farm Fillers

In colonial America, 9 out of 10 people had to work on the land to provide enough for themselves and the 10th person living in town. By 1860, with an agricultural revolution sparked by the reaper well under way, one farm worker could provide for himself and 3½ other persons. As a result, our industrial centers expanded rapidly. By 1940, a farm worker took care of himself and 10 others, including those in the armed forces, and our industrial arsenal could operate full blast. Today, one farm worker provides enough for himself and 18 others.

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Increased use of electricity on farms has led to lower average cost per kilowatt hour paid by farmers but somewhat higher monthly electric bills. An annual survey by the Crop Reporting Service of reports from farmers throughout the United States shows that increased use of electricity is general in all States and regions.

The average cost per 100 kilowatt hours to farmers in July 1955 was $2.61, as compared with $2.65 a year earlier, $2.77 in 1953, and $3.03 for the 1947-52 average. The average monthly electric bill paid by farmers rose to $10 for July 1955, 55 cents above a year earlier and over $3 more than the 1947-52 average.

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Too Much Copper, Zinc, Manganese Can Poison Plants

Here's new evidence that, if a little bit is good, more is not necessarily better, says ________________________. This time it applies to fertilizer.
(State or local authority)

Fertilizing can be overdone--especially with such nutrients as copper, zinc, and manganese, which plants need but can use only in minute quantities.

Research by the U. S. Department of Agriculture shows that an overabundance of these mineral foods is now harming trees and reducing fruit yield in Florida orange groves. It takes less than 20 parts of any one of them per million parts of soil for normal citrus development, and growers have been supplying more than enough. In addition, copper fungicides sprayed on the trees may accumulate in the soil.

Tests carried out by USDA at its Subtropical Fruit Field Station in Orlando, Fla., showed that root formation in orange trees is greatly retarded when any of the three metals is at a high concentration. Of the three, copper proved most harmful in its effect on the tree--it took 15 times as much zinc and 50 times as much manganese as copper to produce equal poisoning. But a combination of two metals in excess depressed root development more than any single metal. Where all three were at high concentration, root growth was cut more than 90 percent.

From the limited experiments carried out, it appears that the orange crop was harmed only in size. Yields were cut, but the oranges produced were normal in color and appearance and they contained normal amounts of citric acid, soluble solids, and vitamin C, reports ____________________.

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USDA 1256 (5-56)

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All States

Feathers Contain Some Mysterious Growth Promoter When Used as Chick Feed

Experimental use of ground feathers in chick rations has led to a search for a mysterious substance which makes chicks grow faster, reports ________________.

Poultry nutrition experts at the U. S. Department of Agriculture's Beltsville, Md., Research Center found that chicks fed a ration containing feather meal gained weight faster than chicks fed the same ration without the feathers. For instance, chicks fed rations containing 4 percent feather meal averaged 376 grams (about three-fourths of a pound) in 4 weeks as compared with 348 grams for similar chicks fed the same ration minus the meal.

Since the substance which triggers the extra growth may be available elsewhere than in feathers, the USDA scientists are engaged in an attempt to find it and isolate it. Their search makes a fascinating mystery story, relates ________ ________________________.

The feather meal was reduced to an ash by subjecting it to a temperature higher than 1,000° F. The remaining material, when added to chick rations, produced the same results as the complete meal. An analysis showed that the ash contained at least 15 different minerals in widely varying quantities. Silicon was the most plentiful, with iron, calcium, and aluminum following in order. Traces were also found of copper, cobalt, lead, tin, manganese, vanadium, zinc, molybdenum, potassium, and even arsenic.

These minerals, in the kind and quantity found in the feather ash, have each been fed to chicks with no definite results. Now the scientists think that the growth-promoting ability of the ash may lie in the fortunate combination of minerals it contains. But there is a possibility that some other unrecognized and unidentified substance may be present in the meal and its ash.

One thing that has surprised the scientists is that, since the growth promoter remains after subjection of the meal to very high temperatures, it is an inorganic (mineral) rather than an organic (animal) substance.

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More Proved Sires Being Used in Dairy Breeding

For the last 3 years, an average of more than 36 percent of the bulls used by State, cooperative, and privately owned dairy breeding units in this country have been proved sires, according to J. F. Kendrick, head of Dairy Herd Improvement Association work in the U. S. Department of Agriculture (or other authority).

Proved sires are selected from DHIA herds on the basis of individual performance of their daughters as compared with the production of their daughters' dams. In 1955, for example, daughters of the 883 proved sires used in artificial breeding produced an average of 11,265 pounds of milk and 476 pounds of butterfat, against 10,575 pounds of milk and 436 pounds of fat for the daughters' dams.

The record number of more than 1,500 artificial-breeding organizations in the United States on January 1, 1956, says Kendrick, indicates the expansion of artificial breeding since 1939, the first year the program was in operation. These units, operating in nearly every State, and in Alaska, Puerto Rico, and Hawaii, have a total enrollment this year of 661,497 dairy herds.

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USDA 1502 (5-56)

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Causes of Low Fertility and Hatchability in Turkey Eggs Studied

Means of improving both the fertility and hatchability of turkey eggs are a subject of research at the U. S. Department of Agriculture's Beltsville, Md., research center. Low fertility and hatchability of turkey eggs has long been a problem of the turkey industry, reports ____________________.

At the start of the breeding season, breeders often use artificial light to lengthen the days and thus stimulate mating and egg production. But too much light causes early molt--a condition that in male birds is accompanied by reduced ability to fertilize eggs.

Hatchability of the eggs, on the other hand, depends upon good physical condition, good breeding, and adequate feeding of the turkey hens.

Work at Beltsville has shown that embryonic cell growth can develop in unfertilized turkey eggs as a result of parthenogenesis. (The few poults developed parthenogenetically rarely if ever survive and develop into adult birds. Almost all die before hatching, though of two such birds hatched recently at Beltsville one was kept alive for 18 days and the other for 22 days.)

Turkey eggs are usually purchased by hatcherymen on the basis of fertility as determined by candling the eggs under incubation. The Beltsville research has shown how parthenogenetic eggs may be mistaken for truly fertile eggs that can develop normal poults. Further study may indicate that a system enabling hatcherymen to purchase turkey eggs on the basis of hatchability should be worked out.

The USDA research now being carried out will also give greater knowledge of the frequency of parthenogenesis in mated flocks at various seasons. It will show, too, how fertility and hatchability in general is related to season.

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Income Improving on Northeastern Family-Size Dairy Farms

A U. S. Department of Agriculture survey shows that Northeastern family-size dairy farms averaged one-fourth larger net farm income in 1955 than in 1950.

Average net farm income on these farms last year was $4,433. This compares with $3,539 in 1950.

Part of the reason for these improved income figures is a gradual increase in the average scale of operations. Last year the farms averaged 201 acres, with 38 total head of cattle, of which 23 were heifers and cows aged 2 years or older. In 1950, the averages were 191 acres, with 34 head of cattle and 22 cows and heifers.

Another important factor in increasing income, the survey revealed, was greater operating efficiency that enabled the dairymen to reduce hired labor costs by 38 percent. In addition, milk production went up 21 percent and average price of milk sold increased from $4.06 to $4.40 per hundredweight.

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USDA 1512 (5-56)

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In Ala., Ark., Calif., Del., Fla., Ga., Ill., Ind., Iowa, Kans., Ky., La., Md., Miss., Mo., N. J., N. C., Okla., S. C., Tenn., Tex., and Va.

Quick Test Found for Sweetpotato Cork Virus

A quick and positive method for checking sweetpotato plants for immunity or resistance to the cork virus disease is providing a shortcut to development of varieties resistant to this disease, according to ____________________. The method was developed by U. S. Department of Agriculture plant pathologists.

By transferring juice from a potato plant to a Scarlett O'Hara variety of morning glory, the USDA researchers are able to determine quickly whether the cork virus is present in the potato plant. If the virus is present, the leaves of the morning glory show signs of the disease, usually within a week. If no symptoms develop, the sweetpotato as a rule is free of the virus.

The internal cork virus disease has been known in this country since 1944 and may have been here before that. It apparently is found wherever sweetpotatoes are grown, though it has little effect on some varieties. It is particularly destructive to the popular Porto Rico variety.

The disease attacks the entire plant, but it is most serious when it produces dark brown to black corky tissue in the root flesh. This makes potatoes undesirable or worthless.

The disease is difficult to recognize in the potato plant, and its presence is often unsuspected until the root has been cut open. That means corky roots may unavoidably be marketed without exposing their unfitness until they reach the dinner table. Canners find the disease particularly troublesome, since the roots may look normal when cooked or canned whole but they show up as defective when cut or broken.

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In Ariz., Calif., Colo., Idaho, Ill., Ind., Iowa, Kans., Mich., Minn., Mont., Nebr., N. Mex., N. Dak., Ohio, Oreg., S. Dak., Tex., Utah, Wash., Wis., and Wyo.

New Sugar Beet Varieties Will Make Mechanization Possible

Mechanization of sugar beet production is on its way, reports ____________________, owing to effective collaboration among the U. S. Department of Agriculture, the Beet Sugar Development Foundation, various State land-grant colleges, and farm machinery manufacturers. A key to eliminating the high labor requirements of the beet sugar crop is the development of new hybrid monogerm varieties, according to ____________________.

A monogerm beet produces seed balls that contain only one seed. Such a beet was long sought as a solution to the problem of thinning excess plants in the fields--a job which must be done by hand with multigerm varieties. Monogerm beets permit spacing of seeds to give hills single plants rather than clumps of plants--making machine thinning and weeding practicable.

A monogerm hybrid found in Michigan in 1948 has been used since then by breeders to develop the monogerm characteristic in other varieties that are prized for their yield, disease resistance, and adaptation.

Thinning machines, developed from the cotton chopper, can be used by producers of monogerm beets. These, together with harvesters that lift the beets and put them onto trucks, will make it possible for a farmer with his family or local labor to grow beets without depending on itinerant labor at any stage.

In some areas experimental monogerm varieties that do as well as the best of the multigerms are now ready for field testing. More are in the process of development, says ____________________.

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Bulk Milk Handling on Farm Offers Advantages and Some Problems

Bulk tanks for handling milk on the farm have certain advantages and certain disadvantages when compared with the usual milk can equipment, according to ____________________.
(State or local authority)

____________________ suggests that a review of these advantages and disadvantages should help producers in deciding whether to shift to bulk handling--or in adjusting to the use of a bulk tank after it is installed.

At present, ____________________ points out, the initial cost of a bulk tank generally exceeds by a substantial margin the cost of new can facilities to handle the same volume. This is particularly true for the smaller dairy farm, and true if the comparison is made on the commonly accepted basis of every-other-day pickup for the bulk milk and every-day pickup for the cans. On larger dairy farms, the difference between the two methods becomes less important and practically disappears if the two are compared on the same frequency of pickup.

The reason for this difference, ____________________ explains, is that the present investment cost per gallon of capacity is high for a small bulk tank, but it decreases rapidly for the larger sizes.

On the credit side, bulk handling eliminates the job of lifting milk in cans. In addition, it may mean actual savings in time on many dairy farms. Can washing at the farm--a requirement in some milksheds--requires considerably more time than cleaning a bulk tank.

This saving in time, though it may be quite significant on many farms, according to ____________________, is not likely to be large enough to permit much if any reduction in the labor force. The result is more likely to be a

(more)

shorter working day or an increase in volume of business within the same length of day. These possibilities, combined with the reduction in heavy lifting, should make it easier for dairy farmers to attract and hold skilled workers.

Loss of milk and butterfat because of stickage is reduced by bulk handling as compared with cans because the surface area of the container is much smaller per gallon of milk in a bulk tank than in a 10-gallon can. This saving may amount to as much as 1 percent in milk and possibly even more in butterfat. Then, too, danger of loss from spillage is much reduced with bulk handling.

Also to be considered are the premiums and reduced hauling charges received by many farmers who have adopted bulk handling. Sometimes these combined premiums run as high as 40 cents per hundredweight, though more commonly they ru between 10 and 15 cents per hundredweight. Such premiums may not be provided or they may not last indefinitely, but when available, they do provide an incentive for shifting from cans to tank.

Off-flavor milk may be a problem on some farms with bulk handling since an entire tank of milk can be lost by off-flavor milk from one cow, whereas with cans the loss might be limited to one or two cans. Ordinarily, this problem is not serious, says ____________________, and it can usually be handled through careful management.

In general, ____________________ sums up, bulk handling is one more step in the mechanization of dairy farming. Along with other devices, such as pipeline milkers, barn cleaners, and silo unloaders, it enables the farm labor force to produce more efficiently and helps to eliminate drudgery. These things have generally been profitable to those farmers who have taken full advantage of them

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Farm Fillers

Florida scientists have found that as little as a third of an ounce of antibiotic in a ton of feed may boost pig growth from 10 to 20 percent. USDA scientists working at Beltsville, Md., have shown that antibiotics in sows' feed results in the birth of more live pigs and these have better ability to survive.

"To the farmer, this can mean a saving of about 20 pounds of feed for every hundred pounds of animal gain and more pigs per litter," says ________ (State or local authority). "These can represent real savings in production costs, one of our most serious concerns in agriculture today."

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Despite all the dramatic advances in the use of antibiotics in agriculture, we have only begun to explore the possibilities in this field, according to ____________ (State or local authority) (or U. S. Department of Agriculture scientists). USDA and State scientists are laying the foundations for wide-scale testing of antibiotics for many possible new agricultural uses--among which are control of fungus, as well as bacterial, plant diseases.

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Enormous growth in the use of chemicals for agricultural jobs is shown by the increase in number of agricultural chemical products used from 50 in 1939 to more than 200 today.

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Fillers for Farm Safety Week

Avoid inhaling insecticides and fungicides in handling, mixing, and applying them; keep them out of eyes, nose, and mouth. Work on the windward side of the rows or areas to be treated, suggests ________________.

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Store insecticides and fungicides where children and animals cannot reach them. Be sure these materials are clearly labeled.

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Avoid heavy dosages of insecticides and fungicides, particularly on edible crops. Follow directions carefully, and never apply more than recommended.

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Be careful about using frozen vegetables, shellfish, and cooked foods that have accidentally become thawed. If ice crystals are still in the food, you can refreeze it immediately. If it is completely thawed, use it immediately. Bacteria multiply rapidly in these foods even at 50° F., and once they begin to spoil they may be dangerous.

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Chemicals Will Kill Stumps, Prevent Regrowth

Killing stumps and preventing stump sprouts is frequently a problem in recently cutover areas and on roadsides and under utility lines where trees may be objectionable. ____________________ (or the U. S. Department of Agriculture) suggests some herbicide treatments for meeting this problem.

Stumps of cut trees may be effectively killed and sprouting prevented, says ________________, by using 2,4,5-T or mixtures of 2,4-D and 2,4,5-T. These should be applied at rates of 8 to 16 pounds of acid equivalent per 100 gallons of diesel oil applied to the stump so as to wet completely the top and the sides to ground level.

Ammonium sulfamate will also do this job effectively. It may be applied as crystals to the surface of the stump, or the entire stump may be sprayed at the rate of 4 to 6 pounds per gallon of water.

Note to editors: This information is taken from ARS special report 22-23, Suggested Guide for Chemical Control of Weeds. Your State specialists may have more specific recommendations suited to the soil and climate in your area.

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Trees Grow Faster When Given Room, Study Shows

Most people know that trees need plenty of room to grow and develop properly, but this theory was put to a practical test recently by the Forest Service of the U. S. Department of Agriculture.

Forest Service workers thinned a 9-year-old stand of loblolly pine in Arkansas from 1,100 trees to 100 trees per acre to test its effect upon root development and tree growth.

At the time the trees were thinned, well developed root systems reached just a little over 3 feet from the tree and covered less than 10 percent of the total area on which the trees were planted.

When the stand was rechecked 2 years later, both roots and tops had expanded to about the same degree. They then covered about 30 percent of the total area.

In this study, live roots were located by means of moisture meters that showed where water was being removed rapidly from the soil.

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USDA 1684 (6-56)

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Farm Fillers

It is estimated that there are more than 10,000 species of destructive insects in the United States. As a group, the insects are man's chief competitor for the food, feed, and fiber that we produce.

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In spite of the progress that has been made in controlling insects, it is estimated that in the United States their loss damage and the cost of control amount to 4 billion dollars annually.

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It has been found that the housefly, one of our most prevalent insect disease carriers, may migrate as much as 20 miles, and that blowflies, important pests of livestock, will migrate at least 28 miles.

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Farmers Entitled to Tax Refund for Gasoline Used Since January 1

Farmers are entitled to claim a refund of the Federal tax on all gasoline bought and used for farming during the 6-month period January 1 through June 30, 1956, ____________________ (State or local authority) reminds ______________ (area) producers.

Any owner, tenant, or farm operator who buys gasoline for use on a farm may file a claim, says ________________. A farmer may also request a refund of the tax on any gasoline used on his farm by a custom operator or a neighbor in connection with cultivating the soil, or raising or harvesting a crop.

Under the law enacted April 2, 1956, the amount claimable this year is 2 cents on each gallon of gasoline purchased and used on a farm for farming purposes during the first 6 months of 1956. In future years claims will be filed for a full 12-month period from July 1 through June 30.

Claims must be filed on Internal Revenue Service Form 2240. This form can be obtained from county agents or District Directors of Internal Revenue. Date for filing for this year's refund is after June 30, but not later than October 1, 1956. The law does not permit payment of claims filed late.

Refund claims must not be made for gasoline used off the farm, according to ________________, or for gasoline used for other than actual farming purposes, as described in Form 2240. This applies to gasoline used on the highway, for personal use such as mowing the lawn, or for processing, packaging, freezing, or canning operations. Sufficient records should be kept to enable the Internal Revenue Service to verify the accuracy of the refund claimed.

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In Maine, Vermont, New Hampshire, New York, Pennsylvania,
Massachusetts, and Connecticut

Forest Management, Regular Cutting Pays on Northeastern Woodlots

Most of the forest land in the white pine region of the Northeast is owned in small blocks. The way these are managed affects the owner's income, the supply of raw material for the wood industries, and the economy of the region, says ____________________.

To test the effects of careful management on average-sized woodlots, the U. S. Forest Service placed a 50-acre woodlot on the Massabesic Experimental Forest in southwestern Maine under management in 1950. Of this land, 37 acres are in merchantable timber--the rest is too young or the land is swampy.

Experience since then shows that a woodlot owner in this part of the country could make about $500 a year on a similar 50 acres at present prices.

An average of 15,000 board feet of sawlogs and 16 cords of pulpwood have been cut each year on the Massabesic Forest 50 acres. This amount is slightly less than the forest is growing. If a forest owner had made these cuts, using his own equipment and labor, he would have spent about 28 working days a year in logging. Motor fuel, oil, and repairs to his equipment would have taken about $76.

According to Forest Service estimates, he would also have taken another day and a half to work in the young stands and would have used about $8 worth of chemicals. Under these conditions the woodlot would have brought him a cash income of $526 a year--nearly $18 a day for practicing forestry and improving his property.

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In California and Oregon only

U. S. Agricultural Attache to Britain to Visit West Coast for Conferences

Dr. Eric Englund, the U. S. Department of Agriculture's attache at the American Embassy, London, England, will be on the Pacific Coast between July 3 and August 5 for conferences with agricultural leaders.

These conferences will be broad in scope, but will relate particularly to importance of expanding United States agricultural exports to the United Kingdom, such as fruits, nuts, vegetables, and cotton grown on the West Coast.

Britain is this country's second greatest agricultural market abroad, being second only to Japan. In 1955 it took $386 million worth of American farm products. Fruits, vegetables and nuts made up $19.5 million of this total, and cotton $43.4.

Dr. Englund has been Agricultural Attache in London since 1952, and was previously attache in Sweden and Finland. He was formerly assistant director of the USDA Office of Foreign Agricultural Relations, predecessor agency of the Foreign Agricultural Service, and assistant chief of the Bureau of Agricultural Economics.

He will arrive in Berkeley, Calif. July 3 for conference with Dean K. A. Ryerson and other University of California officials, and for meetings with trade representatives and agricultural leaders. He then will go to Corvallis, Oreg., for similar discussions with Assistant Dean W. T. Cooney and others at Oregon State College, about August 1.

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All States

Farm Fillers

Cabbage is usually ready to cut when the green cover leaves begin to curl back slightly and expose the whiter leaves beneath, says the United States Department of Agriculture. The cabbage is then as hard and heavy as it will become without being too crisp and brittle for good handling. Harvesting the heads when they are still soft to get higher prices early in the season often means a considerable loss in tonnage. The soft, immature cabbage tends to wilt and become unattractive more rapidly than mature heads.

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The Southern States crimson clover seed crop will be 64 percent more than last year's small crop, but about 33 percent below the South's average production for the past 10 years, says the Crop Reporting Board of the U. S. Department of Agriculture. About 12.1 million pounds of the seed is expected this year, compared to 7.4 million pounds last year. All six producing States are expected to have a larger crop than last year, with Alabama, Georgia, and South Carolina anticipating 2½ times as much. But only Arkansas, where crimson clover seed is relatively new, will have production larger than average. Estimated average yield per acre is 146 pounds, which would be 27 pounds above last year but 26 pounds below the average.

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Farm Fillers

Modern potato digging machinery has helped reduce injuries to potatoes during the digging operation, says the United States Department of Agriculture. A recent study on marketing early potatoes in the South showed that about 9 percent of the potato samples (by weight) had cuts and bruises.

Most injuries were minor ones caused by the wire baskets used as containers after the potatoes were picked up. These injuries probably can be minimized by use of baskets with rubber covered wire, with which injuries to potatoes were reduced to 3 pounds per hundred in experiments.

The USDA also says that spraying jets, which are replacing some washing tanks, reduce the chance for rot by removing soil from potatoes more thoroughly, thus washing away rot organisms which live in the soil.

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Even though marketing of broilers reaches its peak in the summer, demand causes prices to be highest in that season. Summertime demand for broilers comes partially from consumer preference for less fatty foods and desire for outdoor cooking. And, in the summer, meat from most other animals is high in price but low in supply.

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All States

Farm Fillers

Congress has approved funds for constructing a storage plant for a national seed storage laboratory, reports the United States Department of Agriculture. The plant will be built in 1957 at Fort Collins, Colo., where humidity and temperature needed for keeping seeds alive can be maintained economically. With the equipment to improve seed varieties, the USDA hopes to preserve a small quantity of seed from all seed-bearing plants to help in future plant breeding work.

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In the Far East, a postwar shortage of rice has helped increase wheat consumption. Use of wheat in Japan doubled while that of rice was cut almost by one-fourth between 1949 and 1953. A recent survey indicates that Japanese children who receive school lunches now prefer bread to rice, even though a bumper crop has again made rice plentiful.

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United States consumers annually use about 45 pounds per person of fresh, canned, and frozen citrus fruit plus 22 pounds per person of canned and frozen citrus juices, says the United States Department of Agriculture. In 1909, when consumption figures were begun, per capita consumption of all citrus fruit was 16 pounds per capita.

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Farm Fillers

During the 10 years from 1945 to 1954, United States red cherry growers received an annual average of more than $20 million for the crop. Michigan red cherry producers received about half of the total, and the remainder was distributed mainly among Colorado, New York, Ohio, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Utah, Washington and Wisconsin. In 1940 red cherry production was just 79,000 tons, but by 1955 the total had increased to 140,000 tons. More than 90 percent of the cherry crop is either canned or frozen.

The United States Department of Agriculture says that higher prices received for cherries during the past few years have encouraged the planting of new orchards, and the upward trend in production probably will continue during the next several years.

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Cabbage is grown commercially in about 34 states, says the United States Department of Agriculture. From 1950 to 1954 an annual average of 146,000 acres produced 1.2 million tons of cabbage for United States growers. The annual value averaged $41.5 million. About one-sixth of the commercial cabbage crop is used in manufacturing sauerkraut.

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Overseas Sales of U. S. Farm Goods Stepped Up in 1956

About $1½ billion worth of surplus agricultural commodities have been sold to foreign countries in exchange for their own currency since September 1954, reports the U. S. Department of Agriculture. Of this, sale of $759 million worth was arranged for in the first six months of 1956.

The Department's Foreign Agricultural Service has had primary responsibility for these agreements for sales of surplus commodities to other countries since the beginning of the program provided for by Congress under Title I of Public Law 480.

A total of 27 agreements were entered into with 19 countries during the period January-June 1956 alone. Altogether 59 agreements have been arranged with 27 countries.

Commodities sold for foreign currencies include wheat and wheat flour, feed grains, rice, cotton, tobacco, dairy products, fats and oils, poultry, dry edible beans, fruits and vegetables, meat products, cotton linters, and seeds. In terms of dollar value, wheat flour leads the list of commodities thus exchanged ($526 million worth), with cotton second ($358 million).

The foreign money received in exchange is being used for such things as developing agricultural markets abroad, purchase of strategic materials, payment of U. S. debts, and loans to friendly countries for trade and economic development.

Other ways of disposing of surplus agricultural commodities provided for under Public Law 480 include shipments for famine relief and other assistance abroad, donations for foreign and domestic relief through non-profit voluntary agencies and inter-Governmental organizations, and barter contracts providing for exchange of U. S. agricultural commodities for strategic and other materials of use to this country.

Under all these programs, almost $3 billion worth of agricultural commodities have been disposed of since the beginning of operations under Public Law 480 in 1954.

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Improvements Keep Wool in the Running as a High Quality Fabric with Many Uses

No one has yet discovered a perfect fabric for all purposes. But in the public rush to try new synthetic materials, improvements in natural fibers through modern chemical methods are sometimes overlooked, suggests ____________ ____________________.

It will be worth watching what happens to woolen fabrics over the next few years, according to ____________________. U. S. Department of Agriculture scientists, he (or she) reports, are searching for ways to increase the usefulness of wool by adding other desirable qualities to its natural resiliency and wrinkle resistance.

Work is progressing, for example, on a wool fabric that would retain creases and pleats better. Ways are being found to make wool more resistant to shrinkage in laundering, and to make it softer in heavy fabrics. The scientists are improving bleaching methods and devising ways to make wool more resistant to soil. Also, treatment with chemicals is giving wool a resistance to moths and other organisms which attack it.

This wool utilization research is centered at the Department of Agriculture's Western Utilization Research Branch at Albany, California. The work there should strengthen the position of Mary's little lamb as a producer of fiber as well as meat.

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All States

Federal Milk Marketing Orders Help Dairy Farmers

Nearly 190,000 dairy farmers operate under Federal milk marketing orders in supply areas of 65 U. S. cities, reports the U. S. Department of Agriculture.

All Federal milk orders use the classified price plan, which gives the farmer the highest, or class I, price for milk sold by the distributor as fluid milk. But the distributor accepts all milk delivered by the farmer, and he must use some only for other dairy products such as cheese or dry milk. Milk used for making these products brings the farmer a price lower than class I, allowing the distributor to sell the products without a loss.

Minimum prices in Federal marketing orders apply to all milk handlers in the regulated market. They are fixed by the USDA according to supply and demand conditions described at public hearings by producers, handlers and consumers. Before a marketing order is issued, it must be approved by two-thirds of the dairy farmers affected.

Federal marketing orders thus make dairy farmers' marketing plants more effective and help them receive the best returns.

In many fluid milk markets where Federal marketing orders are not used, the buyers and sellers use the classified pricing system voluntarily to maintain an orderly market.

One-third of wholesale milk sold by farmers is sold under Federal order terms. The North Atlantic and Central States use Federal milk orders more than any other region.

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All States

Dairy Products Consumption Climbs Slightly

Americans are consuming more dairy products this year than any year since 1951, says the U. S. Department of Agriculture.

A record low consumption occurred in 1953 when the average per person fell to 682 pounds, but by 1955 the figure was up to 700 pounds. This year another increase of about one percent is expected.

The 1947-49 average was 732 pounds per person, and the 1935-39 average 791.

Some factors contributing to the recent gain include growing incomes, lower retail prices of some dairy items, expanding promotional activities by dairy firms and trade organizations, and the special school milk program (initiated in 1954).

Fluid whole milk consumption is higher now than before World War II, but lower than during the war when retail price ceilings were effective and supplies of other goods inadequate. Cheese consumption fell off slightly in 1955. Fluid milk and cream account for about half the average consumption of dairy products by Americans.

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Inspectors Help Reduce Plant Pests

United States loss from plant pests, now over $3 billion annually, would be substantially greater without the protection of plant-quarantine inspection, says the U. S. Department of Agriculture.

Inspectors last year intercepted about 18,500 destructive pests--11,500 insects and 7,000 diseases. They must recognize known insects and diseases but also be alert for new species of pests.

Commercial imports of plants and plant materials are fairly easy to control, because most are certified as pest-free by the country of origin. But the trained inspectors stationed at border, sea and air ports, examine commercial imports for assurance there are no pests, contaminating soil or prohibited packing material. Fumigation or heat and cold treatments are safeguards.

Passenger and crew baggage, mailed gifts, furnishings of ships and planes and military equipment also may provide means of entry for plant pests. Last year inspectors examined 48,000 vessels and 90,000 planes from overseas, 15 million motor vehicles, 85,000 freight cars and 2,300 pullman coaches arriving from Mexico.

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Farm Fillers

The U. S. Department of Agriculture has reported the fixing of a single variety of common wheat, Chinese Spring, with resistance to 22 races of wheat rust for which it has been tested. USDA and Missouri scientists worked together in achieving this feat. They transferred the rust resistance from a Mediterranean wild grass, using a variety of breeding techniques including hybridization and treatment of plants with colchicine and X-rays. Very few varieties of common wheat can successfully resist any of these 22 rust races.

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A shipment of 141 hogs from Iowa arrived recently in Chile, reports the Foreign Agricultural Service of the U. S. Department of Agriculture. Another 100 head from Mississippi were expected soon.

The shipments are evidence of considerable interest in livestock improvement in Chile, a country which does not produce enough beef and pork to meet its requirements, according to the report. Hogs shipped included Durocs, Poland Chinas and Landraces. Some Berkshires are expected in the next lot.

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United States combined exports of wheat and flour were an estimated 340 million bushels in 1955-56, says the U. S. Department of Agriculture. In 1954-55 the figure was 274 million. This year's total is the highest since 1951-52, when 475 million bushels were exported. The average for 1945-46 to 1949-50 was 415 million, and the five-year pre-war average, beginning in 1934-35, was 46 million.

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In Ariz., Ark., Calif., Fla., La., Miss., and Texas

Farm Fillers

Weather and markets are problems common to farmers the world over. Reports indicate there will be practically no pistachio harvest in Italy this year due to cold waves in February and March. And prices for last season's crop fell as the marketing year drew to a close because of increased competition from other countries.

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International rice trade in 1955 increased 8 percent over 1954, says the U. S. Department of Agriculture, and it exceeded the previous largest postwar export year, 1952. The United States is the world's third largest rice exporter, although its exports have declined 7 percent from 1954, and 35 percent from 1952--a record year.

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The United States produces about 40 percent of the world's oranges and processes more than half of them, mostly into frozen concentrate, reports the U. S. Department of Agriculture. World orange production of 350 million boxes in 1955 was a new record and new plantings in major producing areas exceeded replacement needs. The demand for oranges has increased at a rate sufficient to absorb increased production at profitable prices.

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Chicken More Popular With Modern Production and Sales Methods

In 1940 the United States had 143 million broilers and a $72 million broiler business. Georgia, the leading broiler producing State, topped these figures in 1955, reports the U. S. Department of Agriculture.

One reason for the national increase in the business is that more than two-thirds of today's chicken comes from specialized broiler flocks rather than from flocks whose primary duty is producing eggs.

Another is the high-quality, fresh-tasting, ready-to-cook poultry available in today's markets. About 50 percent of poultry in 1950 moving through wholesale channels was ready-to-cook, but it is now unusual to find a market without prepared poultry.

Whole canned and boned chicken and poultry parts already cut for cooking are convenient for housewives, and film-wrapped packages allow easy visibility and clean handling. Last year frozen prepared poultry sales increased almost 60 percent.

In 1934 United States per capita poultry consumption was just 15 pounds, but last year it was 27 pounds.

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In Ala., Ariz., Ark., Calif., Ga., La., Miss., Mo., N. Mex., N. C.,
Okla., S. C., Tenn., and Texas

Radiation Effects on Cotton to be Studied

Seems there's no end to where cotton may go as a modern textile, with serious efforts being made to improve its qualities--and markets.

How cotton is affected by radiation will be a subject of study at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology this fall, reports the U. S. Department of Agriculture.

Under a contract recently signed with the Department, M.I.T. scientists will seek to learn whether atomic or electrically-generated radiation can be used to make useful new textile products from cotton or to improve the value of cotton in its present uses.

Among the things to be studied are the effect of radiation on the durability of cotton, its strength, elasticity, and ability to absorb dyes. Cotton has already been much improved for certain uses by treatment with various chemicals. How radiation will affect these chemical treatments will also be studied under the M.I.T. contract.

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In Md., Va., N. C., S. C., Ga., Fla., Ala., Miss., La., and Texas

Pastures Can Fight Forest Fires

Pasture strips 18 feet wide make good firebreaks for southern woodlands, suggests ____________________ (State or local authority). And if they are well developed and managed, such strips will yield enough forage to pay for their development and maintenance, according to ________________.

Four years of cooperative work by the U. S. Department of Agriculture and the State of North Carolina show the possibilities for using well-grazed pasture strips for low-cost fire protection in woods which are otherwise hard to reach with fire-fighting equipment, says ________________.

In the USDA-North Carolina experiments, the edges of the fire lanes were ditched and the extra dirt used to build the crown of the strip. This kept pasture plants from being drowned by too much moisture and provided a firm base for traffic with fire equipment.

Otherwise, regular good practices for starting pasture were used. A combination of grasses and legumes was found to be ideal, with the legumes contributing nutritious grazing and some nitrogen for the grass. Perennial legumes--Ladino, Louisiana white clover, and big trefoil--stretched the grazing season and were green and noncombustible in fall and winter.

The legume-grass combination also crowded out weeds that are a fire hazard and have less feed value.

Redtop was the best of the tested grasses in stand establishment, but it was more inflammable and less palatable than alta fescue. Slow-starting Dallis grass almost caught up in stand and exceeded Redtop in yield by the third year.

Though cool-season legumes and alta fescue or orchard grass were least inflammable during fall and winter, summer grazing was improved by adding a little warm weather forage--Dallis grass or lespedeza--to the mixture.

Keeping the forage well grazed on these strips is important to reduced fire hazard, says ________________.

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In Ala., Ga., N. C., S. C., Va., Fla., and Tenn.

Better Ginning Methods Will Benefit Southeastern Cotton Growers

In the few minutes it takes to gin a bale of cotton, its market value and the use to which it can be put is greatly affected. Those in turn affect the price cotton growers can get for their product, says ________________.
(State or local authority)

How to gin cotton to preserve the best qualities of both fiber and seed will be the subject of research at the U. S. Department of Agriculture's new Southeastern Cotton Ginning Laboratory located near Clemson, South Carolina, reports ________________.

The new laboratory will serve Alabama, Georgia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Virginia, Florida, and the south central portion of Tennessee. Cotton production methods are much the same in these areas, says ________________.

Special problems in ginning cotton in the Southeast arise from the cultural and harvest methods peculiar to this area, the varieties grown there, and from the methods commonly used in handling and selling. Research in the Clemson laboratory will be directed toward solution of these problems.

Also, new varieties of cotton, improved growing practices and new pest control methods require continual adjustments in ginning practices. These will be explored, and the work will also be aimed toward finding the best methods of handling and storing seed cotton and determining the moisture content of cotton needed for the best gin operation to produce a top-quality product.

A major goal of the work, according to ________________, will be to find means of preserving lint and seed quality so as to provide maximum returns to growers.

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Research Helps Agricultural Products to Compete with Synthetics

Leather, wool, cotton, vegetable oils and animal fats are some agricultural products which suffer competition from man-made materials of industry. This competition, according to ________________ is part of the reason for some of our troublesome agricultural surpluses.

Here are some of the things that agricultural research by State Experiment Stations and the U. S. Department of Agriculture is doing to help these farm products compete for markets, reports ________________.

New research indicates that wool, through chemical treatment, can be made more resistant to shrinkage and better adapted to home laundering and care. These properties, added to its natural qualities, will greatly improve wool's usefulness as a clothing fabric. Much has already been done to give cotton new properties such as resistance to water, heat, acids, and molds and other organisms that destroy it.

Improved leathers are also in the offing to compete with nylon, cloth, plastics and other nonleather materials now going into the manufacture of shoes and other accessories.

With more research, soaps made from animal fats could regain some of their markets from synthetic detergents and fats could be used more widely in the manufacture of plastics, says ________________. Vegetable oils, now used much less in paints than 20 years ago, could regain some of their lost ground through increased knowledge of their chemical nature and chemical reactions that might convert them into improved paint materials.

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New Resistant Varieties Will Reduce Earworm Threat to Corn

Future new varieties of both field and sweet corn will undoubtedly combine greater resistance to earworm damage with other desirable characteristics, according to ____________ (State or local authority). A number of varieties with varying degrees of resistance to earworm have already been developed as a result of twenty years of cooperative testing and breeding by State experiment stations and the U. S. Department of Agriculture.

Resistance to earworm damage in corn bred thus far is due to several different characteristics, some more easily recognized than others, reports ____________. Some resistant corns have a tight husk, others have silks that are poisonous to earworm larvae, and still others have nutritive qualities that speed up the maturing and emergence of earworms from the ear before they have done much damage.

Damage caused by earworms varies greatly from year to year and from region to region, but estimates indicate an average yearly loss of about $50 million a year to corn growers. Resistant varieties would reduce this loss and eliminate the need for expensive insecticidal control.

An example of comparative losses in 50-bushel an acre southern field corn show the possibilities for control through resistant varieties. In the susceptible Station Mosby variety, loss occurred at the rate of 3.2 bushels per acre. In the somewhat resistant Dixie 17, loss was 1.9 bushels, while in more resistant Dixie 18 the loss was only 0.5 bushel. In the very resistant La. 1030, loss was reduced to 0.2 bushel per acre.

Many widely grown field corns in the South average 16 to 25 damaged kernels an ear under heavy exposure to earworm. Tests show, however, that some hybrids and some corn inbreds used to produce hybrid seed will receive much less damage under similar conditions. Two double-cross hybrids tested in Mississippi averaged only 5 damaged kernels compared with 22 kernels in the once-popular Station Mosby variety. Four other double-cross hybrids tested averaged only 11 to 13 damaged kernels compared with 30 for a corn still widely grown in the same area.

Sweet-corn breeders have also made great strides against earworms. New hybrids--Paymaster, Calumet, Huron, Golden Security, and Aristogold Bantam Evergreen--have 10 to 15 injured kernels per ear in severe infestations in contrast to the 22-kernel average of Golden Cross Bantam. So far greatest earworm resistance is in late white sweet corn varieties. It still remains to transmit it to the more popular early yellow corns. Another problem with sweet corn is that moderate damage may render it unacceptable to consumers and even slight damage will probably call for trimming at extra cost to the producer. Losses in field corn are limited to the amount actually destroyed.

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More Improved Fertilizers Are On the Way

Fertilizers are a lot better than they used to be, but more improved fertilizer materials can be expected in the future, reports ______________ (State or local authority).

Higher analysis fertilizers containing more nutrients and less bulky inert matter, and soluble or liquid fertilizers--all now on the market--have reduced weight and bulk and made both storage and application of fertilizer materials cheaper and easier for farmers and home gardeners.

Industrial and State-Federal research now being carried out will undoubtedly lead to further improvements, says __________.

One of these improvements will be the development of slower acting or less soluble forms of chemical fertilizer that will not leach out of the soil so rapidly. This will mean that enough fertilizer can be applied in one operation to meet the demands of a long-season crop, thus eliminating the need for repeated applications throughout the season. It will reduce present heavy losses of nitrogen through leaching. It will also prevent excessive potash consumption, now a problem in alfalfa and certain other crops in many parts of the country.

Other improvements will change the physical makeup of fertilizer materials, making them easier to store and to apply. A start in this direction has been made with the development of some granular products that have less tendency than older materials to cake and harden during storage and that distribute more easily and uniformly in the field.

A lot more work needs to be done in developing these better fertilizers, says _______. But farmers would do well to be alert for new developments in this field because they will open opportunities for increased efficiency of production and greater farm profits.

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All States

Farm Fillers

Nearly 10 percent of the total U. S. labor force is engaged in the job of getting food from the farmer to the consumer. The task provides direct employment for about 5 million workers, and the bill in 1955 from the time food products left the farm until they were sold at retail was $32 billion.

A food store with 1,900 different items on its shelves would have been a large store in the 1930's, but it is overshadowed by today's supermarkets where 5,000 or more different items are not uncommon.

The farm population of the United States has been decreasing about 600 thousand a year since 1949. Farmers who remained on the land have achieved record breaking harvests on about the same acreage and with 30 percent less labor.

Better ideas of soil management and widespread acceptance of the value of fertilizer and lime have played a dominant role in increasing agricultural productivity in this country since World War II. Farmers today use more than four times as much fertilizer as in the years preceding World War II.

Note to editors: These are excerpts from recent speeches by Assistant Secretary of Agriculture Earl L. Butz and Dr. Byron T. Shaw, Administrator of the Agricultural Research Service, USDA.

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Efficient Use of Feed Can Cut Livestock Production Costs

There is no better way for farmers to cut the cost of livestock production than by reducing waste in the use of feeds, suggests ______________ (State or local authority). Feed acounts for more than two-thirds of the total cost of producing hogs, broilers, and turkeys, and over half the cost of producing eggs. Grain and other concentrates make up well over half the cost of fattening cattle, and about a fourth of the cost of producing milk.

Some excessive costs can be cut by care in the handling of feed--making sure that it is not wasted by spilling from bins and hoppers, and that rats, birds and other pests are not being supported along with the livestock.

Other feed wastes can be avoided by better management, says ________. For example, too many dairymen increase milk production by feeding huge amounts of concentrates when they should be breeding or buying cows with higher productive capacity and feeding more forage. A good dairy cow that gives 10,000 pounds of milk a year should be getting 75 percent of her nutrients from forage, but she's probably getting only half if she's managed according to usual practices.

Most pigs are going to market too heavy, says ______________. Many of them have been fed too few vitamin and mineral supplements for best use of grain.

Broiler producers, on the other hand, have made very good progress in putting results of research into practice. With improved feeding formulas adopted in the last 5 years they are saving about a pound of feed per pound of broiler. Good results are also being obtained with turkeys, and some improvements are beginning to show up in the feeding of pigs.

Information on how to feed various types of livestock for efficient production can be obtained from county agricultural agents, State extension services, or the U. S. Department of Agriculture.*

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* Note to Editors: You may wish to list some bulletins on livestock feeding that are available in your State.

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Research Shows Animals Inherit Ability to Gain or Maintain Weight on Less Feed

Federal-State research over the years has shown that the ability of some animals to put on weight or maintain body weight on lower quantities of feed than that required by other animals of their breed is an inheritable quality, reports ________. These findings, says ________, point to possibilities for increasing profit in livestock production by breeding animals that use feed more efficiently than present day commercial types.

In beef cattle, for instance, research by the U. S. Department of Agriculture at Beltsville, Maryland, and Miles City, Montana, has established the fact that rate of gain is a highly inheritable trait. In lines selected especially for ability to produce meat efficiently, steers put on 2½ pounds a day on the same feed that gives a gain of only 2 pounds in standard commercial strains. And these animals reach market finish with standard weight and carcass quality. Some unusual animals in test lots gain as much as 3 pounds a day, and research workers are sure that they can get these gains in the type and kind of beef cattle that breeders and markets prefer.

Similar results have been obtained with meat-type hogs. When breeding for leaner type hogs began about 20 years ago through Federal-State research, test animals reached 200 pounds in 6 to 7 months on about 380 pounds of feed per 100 pounds of gain. Now test animals reach 200 pounds in 5 to 5½ months--sometimes less--on 300 to 350 pounds of feed per 100 pounds of gain.

In tests with dry dairy cows, where milk production is not involved, it has been found that animals vary a great deal in the amount of feed needed to maintain body weight. And modern strains of broilers bred for meat production have demonstrated their ability to grow faster on rations used 25 years ago than broilers did back then.

Comparison of research results indicates that breeding for feed efficiency can be applied profitably to all types of livestock production. Since feed represents the highest single production cost, anything which can be done to cut feed costs means more money in the farmer's pocket, says ________________.

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U. S. Farm Real Estate Values Continue to Rise

The value of U. S. farm real estate continued to climb during the past year in almost all States despite lower farm income in recent years, according to a recent report by the U. S. Department of Agriculture on developments in the farm real estate market.

During the year ended July 1, 1956, values of farmland increased in all except 6 States--Kentucky, Nebraska, Kansas, New Mexico, Utah, and Colorado. Changes ranged from a 5 percent decline in Colorado to a 15 percent increase in Florida. Increase in value for the United States as a whole was 3 percent, and new record-high levels were established in 29 States in mid-1956.*

Principal reasons for the generally increasing farmland values, according to the USDA report, are a strong demand from farm operators for additional land and the opinion on the part of present owners and prospective purchasers that farmland is a safe long-term investment as population continues to increase and farmland is limited. In some regions, values have also been improved by such factors as urban or industrial expansion, demand for part-time farms and rural residences, generally favorable crop prospects this year, some increase in prices received by farmers for some commodities, and expansion of irrigation.

The volume of farm sales also increased for the second year during the 12 months ended on March 15, 1956. Farmers continued to be the most important single group of buyers--they purchased nearly 65 percent of all farms sold. Farmers who already owned some land bought from one-third to two-fifths of all farms sold in most regions.

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*Note to editors: Changes for your State are given in Figure 1 (map) on page 2 of attached report, and in tables on pages 34 and 35. Changes in values over the four months, from March-July 1956, are shown on front page.

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Which Wheat is Which?

Ever wonder which wheat is which? Or did you know that there are several different major types of wheat and that one kind is needed for high quality in bread, another for cakes and pastry, and still another for macaroni and similar products?

The major classes of wheat and their uses are described as follows by

_______________________________.
(State or local authority)

Hard wheats of the quality especially suited to making bread flours are grown throughout the Great Plains. Hard red winter wheat is grown principally in the Southern Great Plains and hard red spring wheat chiefly in the Northern Great Plains. These wheats contain a relatively large amount of the strong, elastic gluten that give bread flour the proper rising quality.

Soft red winter wheat is produced in the eastern half of the United States and soft white wheat predominates in the Pacific Northwest, with some important districts in Michigan, New York and California. Flours from these wheats are used in making pastry, crackers, biscuits and cakes. Most of this wheat is softer in texture and lower in protein content than the hard wheats used for making bread flours.

Still another type of wheat is used in the manufacture of macaroni, spaghetti, and similar products. This is durum wheat, grown principally in North Dakota and other North Central States. Macaroni and spaghetti made from durum wheat has a slightly yellow color and the firm consistency after cooking preferred by most users of these products.

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Today's Chicken and Turkey Are Just What Mama Ordered

The average housewife may know nothing about the science of genetics as applied to animal breeding, but nevertheless she exerts a big influence on those who do, says ______________________.
(State or local authority)

The housewife can be thanked, Mr. ______ points out, for the improved appearance of poultry offered on today's markets. Store sales showed that women prefer a ready-dressed, meaty bird with yellow skin and light pin feathers that eliminate the tedious picking job that used to be part of getting a chicken or turkey ready for cooking. Breeders went to work to help producers meet these preferences and to provide a bird that is easy to dress for ready-to-cook sales.

The results can readily be seen by comparing the poultry on the market today to that obtainable a few years back. And poultry sales have increased phenomenally--sales of chicken meat increased from 13 pounds to 21 pounds per person annually between 1935 and 1955; turkey sales jumped from less than 2 pounds to 5 pounds per person in the same period.

Scientists at the Beltsville Research Center of the U. S. Department of Agriculture produced a superior broiling chicken by crossing a Silver Cornish rooster--developed at Beltsville by crossing a number of different strains of chickens--with a New Hampshire hen. The result is a meaty bird with broad breast and the light feathers and yellow skin color desired by both producer and consumers.

The Beltsville small white turkey is another product of this breeding work.

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No Need to Feed Clothes Moths and Carpet Beetles

There's no longer any need for playing host to clothes moths and carpet beetles, with their endless appetites for rugs, clothes, and household furnishings. Materials are at hand, says ______________________________, (State or local authority) to route these invaders from your premises.

A formula developed by the U. S. Department of Agriculture for use by the Army Quartermaster Corps, known as "EQ-53," is now available through many retail outlets. It will probably carry some other commercial name, but the retailer will be able to point out a product containing the "EQ-53" ingredient --a nonionic DDT emulsion. This can be used to protect all washable woolens, raw wool, or feathers. One tablespoon added to wash or rinse water for each pound of dry material will protect it from insects until it is again washed or dry-cleaned.

Household woolens, clothing, rugs and animal fibers that cannot be washed can be successfully treated with five-percent DDT household sprays. These can easily be applied with hand sprayers to suits, coats, and other woolen garments to protect them against insect pests during storage periods. Rugs can be protected for a year or more by a single spray. Its effectiveness lasts even under conditions of daily use and frequent vacuum cleaning.

Experiments show that DDT also offers excellent protection for bristles, curled hair, hair felt, wool felt, and similar animal fibers, according to

__________________.

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Foreign Trade Fairs Exhibit U. S. Agricultural Products

In the past year, the United States has participated in 10 international trade and food fairs with a total attendance of nearly 7,500,000 people from other lands, reports ______________.

The exhibits of U. S. agricultural products shown at these fairs were arranged by the Foreign Agricultural Service of the U. S. Department of Agriculture, working in cooperation with private agricultural trade groups and other government agencies.

These displays exhibit abroad the plentiful products of our farms and provide an opportunity for contacts between U. S. marketers and foreign buyers. Industries provide exhibit ideas, technical personnel, display materials, and, in some cases, commodities for sampling--such as ice cream cones, doughnuts, or hot dogs. The Government organizes and manages the exhibit, arranges for its design, construction and operation, and provides travel expenses of industry technicians and commodity specialists. Department of Agriculture costs come from funds accruing under the Agricultural Trade Development and Assistance Act of 1954.

All of this is part of a general program to promote the export of American farm products, says ______________. That the program is achieving some success is shown by the fact that the overseas movement of American farm products except for cotton, is now the highest in 30 years.

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Cattle May Soon Bite Back at Heel Fly Grubs

Entomologists have been working for a long time to find an insecticide that can be fed or injected into the bodies of beef cattle to destroy heel-fly grubs before they bore holes in the hide on the animals' backs. Many insecticides have been tried and rejected either because they were ineffective or because harmful residues remained after their use.

Latest news on this front reports _________, is that an apparently successful systemic insecticide (one that works internally) has been found. It's Dow ET-57, an organic phosphate chemical with an almost unpronounceable name--0,0-dimethyl 0-2,4,5-trichlorophenyl phosphorothioate. Preliminary tests indicate that one dose, given orally to an animal just after the heel-fly season ends, will move throughout the body to destroy both northern and common species of grubs before they break through the hide.

ET-57 will not be available commercially, however, for some time. Although considerable research has been done it will take at least another year to investigate fully its effects on treated animals, possible residues in meat and dairy products resulting from various size doses, the most practical means of administering the insecticide, and its performance in different geographical areas.

In preliminary tests, one dose of ET-57 given by mouth was sufficient to kill 92 to 100 percent of all grubs within a few days. Long-lasting residues appear unlikely to occur in the meat of treated animals, but more work is being done to determine the necessary time limit between treatment and

(more)

slaughter. Presence of residues in the milk of treated cows for several days suggests that ET-57 will not be satisfactory for treating dairy animals.

Research on ET-57 is being done by the U. S. Department of Agriculture, the Dow Chemical Company, and by several State experiment stations.*

Meanwhile the search for new and even more effective systemic insecticides continues. A promising one that can be applied externally is Bayer 21/199. Applied in tests as a spray, it prevented development of grubs after they entered the body.

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* At least a dozen cattle-producing States have shown interest in this work. Some are doing work on their own, some with the Department. You might want to check with your own experiment station.

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Wash., Ore., Neb., Colo., N. Mex., Wyo., Tex., Ariz., Calif., Uta

Thick Planting, Heavy Nitrogen Use, Increase Stalk-Breaking in Irrigated Corn

Research carried out by the U. S. Department of Agriculture and the Washington State Experiment Station point to thicker planting and heavier use of nitrogen fertilizer as the causes of lodging (stalk breaking) in irrigated corn.

Since thick planting and increased fertilization together increase corn yields, the tendency is to step up each of these on irrigated land where competition for moisture does not have to be considered, says ____________ (State or local authority). But the effect has been an increased problem in recent years from stalk breakage. Sometimes up to 60 percent of the stalks in a field break before harvest, and mechanical pickers miss most of the ears on down stalks.

Recent research indicates that such measures as deep cultivation and hilling of corn plants are not effective in reducing stalk breakage. Apparently greater height of the stalk and weight of ears on the stalk are responsible. Growing stalks close together causes them to grow taller. And, while nitrogen increases the thickness of the stalk, it also makes for greater weight and bulk higher up which more than offsets this added strength and causes the stalks to break.

In the studies carried out in Washington, stalk breakage under low nitrogen fertility ranged from 8 percent at 9,300 plants an acre to 46 percent at 26,200 plants an acre. Under high nitrogen fertility, breakage was 15 percent at 9,300 plants, 60 percent at 26,200 plants an acre.

Maximum yields of grain were obtained at about 20,000 plants per acre for both high and low nitrogen fertilizer levels, but stalk breakage was 49 and 37 percent, respectively.

The scientists who have been studying this problem feel that it would be helpful to farmers if they had a good test--possibly based on the "breakability" of a sample corn stalk--that could warn them early in the fall of a probable stalk-breakage problem. Then they would be forewarned to irrigate up to the middle of September to keep the stalks from becoming dry and brittle prematurely and to harvest their crop as early as possible. Further research may develop a satisfactory test of this kind.

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USDA Survey Will Describe Changes in Food Production and Consumption

Are farmers producing the right things to meet modern eating habits? Or are modern eating habits not altogether what they should be in relation to nutritional needs, and should some people improve their diets?

Clues to help in answering such questions may come out of a large-scale survey of family food consumption taken by the U. S. Department of Agriculture in 1955.

Other questions which the survey will help to answer when all the data are compiled and analyzed are:

1. How does consumption of major foods differ by region, by type of community, and by income?

2. How does consumption of major foods now compare with patterns shown in earlier surveys?

3. How do economic and social changes influence family eating habits--changes such as higher or lower income, shifts from rural to urban areas or vice versa, occupation changes, or changes in availability of food markets?

4. How do changes in food marketing affect eating habits?

5. In what areas and among which groups of people do diets need to be improved, and what needs to be done to make this possible?

This survey will be grist for the mill of researchers in government, business, and many private organizations all over the country who are seeking the answers to questions that are vital to the adjustment of food production to present day demand for food.

Because of the large volume of data coming from the survey, it will take many months to get specific answers to the many questions being asked, say the USDA researchers who are working with the data.

USDA 3808 (12-56)

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Meat Takes Largest Cut Out of Family Food Budget, According to USDA Survey

About one-fourth of the average family budget for food for home use is spent for meats. This is according to a survey carried out in 1955 by the U. S. Department of Agriculture, some of the results of which are just being released.

Fifteen percent of the food budget in the average family goes for all dairy products, excluding butter. This would include such things as milk, cheese, cottage cheese, ice cream, and cream for coffee or whipping. About 12 percent of the total food expenditure is used for cereals and bakery products, and 11 percent for vegetables.

About 8 percent is spent for poultry and eggs, another 8 percent for fruits. Fats and oils, including butter, take about 5 percent of the food budget, and only 3 percent goes for sugars and sweets.

Two agencies of the USDA--the Agricultural Research Service and the Agricultural Marketing Service--cooperated in gathering the data which gave rise to these estimates. The large volume of statistics gathered are still being compiled and analyzed. When the job is complete, it is expected that this survey will give the best picture so far of the dietary habits of American families, their differences by regions, income levels, and the size of community in which they live.

The results should be helpful to food marketing agencies and to those who are studying human nutritional needs, habits, and the possible effects upon health of various diet patterns.

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Clearer Picture of U. S. Food Market is Emerging from USDA Survey

Families who keep careful account of their food budgets will be interested to know that it cost $7.68 per week to feed the average U. S. citizen in the spring of 1955. This covered the meals he ate at home and the food and beverages he consumed away from home.

This and other interesting and useful facts about U. S. food expenditures and food markets are emerging from an extensive study undertaken in 1955 by the U. S. Department of Agriculture. Two-hour interviews were held with more than 6,000 families, and the results were tabulated on thousands of punch cards. When the results are completely analyzed, a clearer picture of the U. S. food market and changes that are taking place will be available.

The survey was undertaken to fill a need for recent and detailed information about food consumption and expenditures for food, by regions, by farm people and townspeople, and by various income groups.

Behind all the averages, differences are showing up in relation to region, income, and size of community in which people live. For instance, while the over-all average per person spent for food and beverages at home and away from home was $7.68, the regional average varied: in the Northeast, it was $8.91; in the West, $8.86; in North Central States, $8.08; and in the South, $5.87. Similar differences are evident between farm and non-farm families, and between families with different income levels.

The survey also showed that families in the U. S. spent, on the average, $26.34 a week for food, of which about 18 percent was spent for food and beverages away from home. The survey covered only families in which at least 10 meals were served at home during the week. Average size of the families surveyed was between 3 and 4 persons.

The survey pointed to a shift in farm-family eating habits in recent years. It used to be that farm families ate almost all their meals at their own home or others' homes or carried their lunches. But two-thirds of farm families in 1955 were regularly buying some food away from home.

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1957 Supplies of Eggs, Chickens, Turkeys, May Outrun High '56 Levels

Poultry products--eggs, broilers, and turkeys--produced in 1956 at record high levels, bid fair to be available in even greater supply in 1957, reports ____________.

This is good news for consumers because there will be plenty of high quality eggs, chickens, and turkeys in their food markets at very favorable prices. Prices, that is, about the same as in 1956.

For producers, the outlook is a little less optimistic, says __________, since farm prices in 1957 are likely to average a little lower for these products, except possibly for broilers.

Broiler production promises to be higher than the one and one-third million estimated for 1956, but prices to farmers may rise slightly because red meat supplies will be down a little and an expanding market will readily absorb a moderate increase in supply.

Turkey prices are expected to be lower at least until late summer. After that they may equal corresponding monthly prices in 1956. Prices declined in late 1956 when heavy marketing began from a record crop of over 76 million turkeys. Reports of farmers' intentions indicate that the crop will be equally large or larger in 1957.

Egg prices have been running lower than last year. The present outlook, barring extraordinary weather conditions, is that prices this spring will be a little below the 37 cents average per dozen received by farmers in the April-to June period last year. The number of laying hens will be about the same as last year, but they will be producing more eggs per bird.

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U. S. Appetite for Meat Makes Picture Bright for Livestock Producers

Meat is such a popular item in the American diet, that so long as employment and incomes remain high and population continues to increase, meat producers can be sure of a gradually rising market for their livestock products. So says ______________________ (State or local authority) in reporting on the outlook for meat producers in the coming year.

It seems probable, reports ______________, that over the next few years livestock production will continue to expand gradually and that prices will be reasonably satisfactory to producers.

This will represent a slowing down, however, of the spectacular advances in meat production that have taken place in the last few years. Since 1951, meat output has climbed from 22 to 28 billion pounds, an increase of 28 percent.

In 1956 consumers were treated to their largest serving of meat since consumption records have been kept. On the average, they ate about 163½ pounds per person, topping the previous high record of 162½ pounds per person in 1908.

Unfortunately for producers, overly large supplies had a depressing effect upon prices. Experience shows, according to ________, that when supplies exceed 160 pounds per person--as they did last year--prices fall to a level below that acceptable to producers.

In 1957 consumers will pay just a little more for their meat than they did in 1956, but retail prices will remain well below a few years ago. Pork supplies will be down, and there may be a little less beef. Despite higher prices and government incentive payments for wool more lamb is uncertain because of labor shortages on western ranches and drought in the Southwest.

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Americans Will Continue to Eat Well in 1957

U. S. civilians were dished up a record high plate of food in 1956. They took advantage of it by eating 13 percent more per person than they were consuming before World War II (1935-39), reports ______________________.
(State or local authority)

The menu for 1957 should be equally generous, according to __________, except for a small reduction in beef and pork supplies. With employment and wage rates higher than ever, demand for all this food should continue strong.

Dollarwise, we will probably spend a little more for food in 1957 due to slightly higher retail food prices, at least in the first half of the year, says ________. But Americans, on the average, will continue to spend just about one-fourth of their income for food, as they have been doing in recent years.

While there will be a little less beef and pork, more poultry meat and eggs are expected to be available in 1957 than in 1956. Plentiful dairy products are also in prospect and there will be heavy supplies of edible fats and oils. Food grains also will continue in abundant supply.

Fresh fruit and vegetable supplies are a little harder to predict, according to ___________. But for early '57 he says we can expect fewer fresh apples and grapes because of smaller crops in 1956, but more pears. More fresh citrus fruit is likely this winter and spring than last year's supply. A reduction in acreage of winter season fresh vegetables is indicated by current reports from producing areas, but there will be some increase in imports to offset a smaller domestic harvest. About the same amount of processed fruit (canned, frozen, and dried) will be available this year as last, and supplies of processed vegetables will be much larger.

All in all, we should find plenty of food and a rich variety in our markets in 1957.

USDA 3887 (12-56)

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Average U. S. Family Has Raised Its Standard of Living

With more money to spend, Americans are "doing what comes natural"—increasing their standard of living and enjoying more of the comforts and luxuries of life.

________________________ says there has been a steady increase in
(A State or local authority)
income per person after taxes, and Americans are using a substantial part of this extra return to buy more of the goods and services that make for better living.

Per capita disposable income in 1955 was 15 percent above the 1948 level in constant dollars—that is, after adjustment is made for changes in the value of the dollar. In other words, the average consumer in 1955 had $1.15 in buying power for every dollar the 1948 consumer had. (This does not apply, of course, to people whose incomes have remained stable or have not increased enough to compensate for rising prices.)

Also, all goods and services for sale, says __________, have not benefited equally from this increased consumer buying power. Food and automobiles have made out especially well in attracting consumer dollars. This indicates some shift in taste and preferences, at the expense of such things as clothing and public transportation.

Most of the increase in expenditures for food is for more expensive types of food, rather than larger quantities. Compared with 1948, the more expensive diet of 1955 included more meat, less potatoes, more frozen fruits and vegetables and less fresh, dried, and canned fruits and vegetables. Some of the increased expenditure was for more meals eaten away from home.

To illustrate other improvements in family living standards, the percent of families owning automobiles increased from 54 percent in 1948 to 73 percent in 1956. Percentage of electrically wired homes with mechanical refrigerators increased from 77 to 94 percent; homes with washing machines went up from 67 to 84 percent.

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USDA Economists See Some Continuing Adjustment Problems in Agriculture

A growing population and an expanding economy promise that eventually demand for U. S. farm products will catch up with the bountiful supply that modern machinery and improved farm practices have made possible. But it will take at least five years, maybe longer, say the agricultural economists (or some local or State authority).

Most parents have had the experience of trying to get a little child to eat more than he seems to want--more of things that are "good for him." His demand never seems to match the supply of wholesome food provided. Then, suddenly, when further effort seems futile, nature takes care of the problem by transforming the child into a voracious teen-ager with an appetite equal to any surplus situation.

Roughly the same sort of situation exists in regard to eating up U. S. farm surpluses. The appetite of our population can be expected to grow as time passes, but we can't be sure how long it will take to catch up with supply. It will probably take at least five years, say the farm economists, but it may take longer, depending upon the speed with which farmers make some necessary adjustments and the extent to which further adoption of improved farm methods may increase supplies.

Meantime, say the economists, we can expect continuation of the trend toward commercialization of agriculture because of the need for high cash outlays and high investments for farming. Small farms will continue to be consolidated, and agricultural products will be supplied by fewer but larger farms. Low-income farm people can be expected to move in increasing numbers into nonfarm jobs, with a resulting improvement in agricultural incomes and a better balance between people and resources remaining in agriculture.

The long-term look is optimistic, say the economists, once we work our way out of the current surplus situation. A successful soil bank program to remove some acreage from surplus crop production, continued development of foreign markets, and government disposal programs will help us toward this goal.

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USDA Studies Will Reveal Any Effects of Aircraft Noise on Farm Animals

What kind of noise annoys an animal? Most of us don't know much about the subject, but many farmers have been wondering whether jet aircraft noise is upsetting their livestock--enough, that is, to lower production of eggs, milk, or meat.

About a year ago the Air Force asked the U. S. Department of Agriculture to look into this matter. Airplanes are likely to be around for awhile, and so will farm animals. And everyone seems to be in favor of harmony between the two.

Pigs were chosen by the USDA for study because they grow rapidly and have shorter life cycles than larger animals. Results are expected to show how much noise livestock can stand without ill effects.

Work so far shows that animals display no outward symptoms and undergo no anatomical changes when exposed to aircraft noise. Any effects upon production will take longer to establish.

Test animals are being exposed to the sound of both jet and conventional piston-type aircraft through recordings of the actual sound. These are piped into the test pens between 6 a.m. and 6 p.m. at irregular intervals ranging from only a few seconds to 10 or 12 minutes. Sound intensity varies from 110 to 135 decibels (sound measurement units). Maximum intensity of sound one mile from a jet airfield is 120 decibels. (Sound intensity close to a large tractor is between 95 and 100 decibels.)

So far, the only visible reactions of the pigs have been a momentary pause in eating, an occasional start, or a gentle waggle of the ears. Pigs are slaughtered periodically and examined carefully for possible anatomical effects. Electrocardiographs are used to measure any changes of heart rate.

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